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LETTERS OF THE REV. H. H. JEAFFRESON

EDITED BY
REV. C. E. LAMBERT, M.A.

PRINCIPAL OF THE CLERGY TRAINING SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE, EXAMINING CHAPLAIN
TO THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

FOREWORD BY THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER

WITH PORTRAIT AND SHORT MEMOIR

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
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FOREWORD

WHEN a man's life has been somewhat withdrawn and his own lines of thought were of the more reserved and interior kind, some introduction of him to a larger public by a friend may be permissible. So I persuade myself, in response to the invitation to write some words in preface to the letters of Herbert Jeaffreson. Not that Jeaffreson was at all a mere recluse. He had served in a great London parish, and came then into manifold contact with life. And in later days the many visitors to Florence who enjoyed the delightful hospitality of the Villa degli Angeli below Fiesole on Sunday afternoons will remember as its centre, in the garden and the cool house and the quiet Oratory, the personality of the host, at once spiritual and urbane, alive with human sympathy as well as with the priest's instinct for souls, eagerly and delicately responsive to the various interests of life in the beautiful land in which he had come to rest. But this and much else will be perceived in the letters themselves. They will show how deep he went in trained and reverent enterprises of thought upon the mysteries of life and faith: how delicate was his insight into spiritual experience, and how willing and ready his sympathy.

Personally I have known very few for whom I felt, with such comparatively slight opportunities of

close friendship, so much reverence and regard. The combination in him of thinker, priest, observer, friend, and even in some sense man of the world, was very distinctive and very rare. There was always a touch of the austerity which witnesses to strong inward discipline and to a constant remembrance of God. He saw habitually the sternness of life, and felt the anxiety with which it must be watched by those who care for goodness and desire the welfare and victory of the kingdom.

But there went with this a quiet peace and a gentleness of spirit, which made a brightness round him. Intercourse with him was delightful; and though he never caught at friendships, I think that he enjoyed them deeply, and was at pains to cherish them.

I hope many will come to know him, and know him from within, through these letters.

EDW. WINTON,

FARNHAM CASTLE,
August 30, 1916.

PREFACE

THE work of selecting and editing these Letters was to have been undertaken by the far more competent hands of the late Bishop of Gibraltar (Dr. William Edward Collins), to whom the Rev. H. H. Jeaffreson was Chaplain.

The Bishop's failing health and then his deeply-lamented death prevented the carrying out of this plan. I never had the privilege myself of personal acquaintance with Mr. Jeaffreson, but for some years I had known and greatly appreciated some of his books. In the winter of 1912 I first made the acquaintance of Mrs. Jeaffreson at Bordighera, and it was through a conversation with her that I came to be entrusted with the work of collecting and editing her late husband's letters.

A large amount of material was found to be available, and the task of selection has been one of some difficulty. The writer's range of interests and his sympathies were very wide, and his judgments on all sorts of subjects were interesting through their penetrating insight and independent point of view. With great regret I have had to omit much of real value through the necessary limitation of space. I have given the chief place in the collection to the letters of spiritual counsel and advice, addressed to many different correspondents at various times. These

exhibit pre-eminently the qualities of shrewd practical wisdom and intense personal sympathy. The value which the original recipients set upon these letters and their testimony to the permanent help derived from them, have confirmed me in the belief that they would be useful to a wider circle of readers.

The rest of the letters are somewhat miscellaneous in character. They touch partly on subjects theological and apologetic, partly on questions of practical difficulty. The last few should be taken merely as specimens of the writer's reflection on more general subjects.

There seemed to be no reason for preserving a chronological order in the arrangement of the material, and the grouping is roughly according to subject. No impression of monotony seems to be given, even when the same subject is treated in consecutive letters; for the writer had no cut-and-dried answers, and he seemed to think out a subject afresh for every new enquirer. In a few cases I have ventured to divide a letter, which dealt with quite different topics, in order that the grouping under subjects might be better preserved.

Mr. Jeaffreson was a convinced believer in the great truths of the Catholic Faith, and he had a profound trust in the traditional system of the Catholic Church. With this loyalty to tradition was combined a rich speculative vein of thought, and his ideas will often be found stimulating and suggestive. This quality, however, is naturally more apparent in his chief work, "The Divine Unity and Trinity," than in his letters, but it is not absent in the latter. It is hardly necessary to say that the general sympathy, which an editor has with the mind of the writer whose work he edits, does not necessarily imply his

agreement with every statement made, or with every view advanced.

The short Memoir has been written by one of Mr. Jeaffreson's most intimate friends, one who had an intuitive sympathy with his mind and outlook, and one of those with whom he was wont to exchange his deepest thoughts.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to those who have kindly lent me the original letters, and for their patience in leaving them in my hands for so long a time.

C. E. LAMBERT.

CAMBRIDGE,
June, 1916.

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MEMOIR

OF the external life of the writer of these letters there is not much to be said. Herbert Hammond Jeaffreson, the son of Christopher and Amelia Jeaffreson, was born on July 14, 1848; he was educated at a private tutor's, then at Brentwood, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was ordained deacon in 1872, and was curate first at Cookham Dene, then at St. Michael's, Highgate; he married, in 1874, Edith Mary Young, daughter of the Rev. James Young, Rector of Whitnash; later in the same year he was ordained Priest.

While at Highgate he formed one of the closest friendships of his life with the Rev. Andrew Jukes, to whom he owed much, and for whom he always felt a deep affection and reverence.

In 1878 he left Highgate and helped Mr. Liddell of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, on Sundays, while in the week he assisted Mr. Cleaver, of St. Peter's Home, Kilburn; he gave more and more time to this latter work, till on Mr. Cleaver's resignation he was in sole charge there. In 1887 his health broke down, and for a year or two he was mostly abroad in Italy and Switzerland, returning in 1889 to be assistant Priest at St. Augustine's, Kilburn, under Mr. Kirkpatrick, to whom he was greatly attached.

In 1894 he again left England, for reasons of health, and lived at Fiesole, ministering at both the

English churches in Florence, and also in the chapel of his own house, the Villa degli Angeli, by the permission of Bishop Collins of Gibraltar, one of his best and dearest friends, whose Chaplain he became. During the last two or three years of his life his health failed more and more, and he passed away on October 29th, 1909.

Such was the uneventful outward setting of Herbert Jeaffreson's life; all its distinction and significance was in the mental and spiritual region. There was a certain reserve and shyness in his temperament; partly perhaps due to the fact that he had never had the full, free, corporate life of a public school; partly to his always delicate health. But if he lost some things in his education, he gained others; he escaped the conventionality which is apt to beset those whose minds are cast into one mould, and he had the inner solitude in which original thought is best developed.

Brought up in the Evangelical School of thought, his mind opened to other influences at Cambridge. He used to say that when there, and studying for the first time Dr. Liddon's Bampton Lectures on our Lord's Divinity, it flashed on him that the Incarnation was the central doctrine of the Faith; and yet it seemed to him that that was almost too good to be true. While still an undergraduate his mind (always deeply influenced by Plato) was already working on the Catholic Faith which he had absorbed; and once when he was discussing with several friends what they wished to aim at in life, he said he should like to write something on the Christian Faith on the lines of Plato's ontology. This he did later in life, publishing in 1888 his book on "The Divine Unity and Trinity," a work far too little known, but much valued by those who have studied it, as full of

suggestion, and both stimulating and controlling thought. He combined a childlike simplicity of faith with breadth of view and philosophic grasp; he himself says in the book just mentioned, "The Creed is a starting-point, not a goal. Believing in the Church as God's inspired teacher, in her Councils as her organs, and in the Nicene Creed as her voice, we are bound as Catholics not to re-open questions which she has settled, but to regard her decisions as a height gained from which to scale other heights. . . . If we would make the Creed a living power, we must treat it as a practical geometer treats the conclusions of his science when he does not permit them to remain dead in his books, but applies them to the measurement of the earth or the stars." If ever his opinions differed from those usually received, it was on some point which he considered that the Church had not yet weighed and decided. "In all I have said, I submit myself to the judgment of wise and good men, and to the authority of the Catholic Church. In the words of St. Augustine, '*Errare valde possum; hæreticus esse nolo.*'"

Ideas were always more real to him than facts and circumstances; but his firm grasp of the mystery of the Incarnation prevented him from undervaluing the latter. He held it to be one of the glories of Christian theology that it valued in true proportion both truths and facts; truths as the sources of facts, facts as the exponents of truths.

He was naturally susceptible to depression, though perhaps only those who knew him intimately realized it; his want of physical vitality and a keen realisation of the sorrows, sins and bewilderments of the world accounted for this. He used to say that pessimism was the only reasonable point of view in those who had not the Catholic Faith; for him,

illuminated by that Faith, hope and courage failed not, for their one source was in the revelation of God Himself.

Of Herbert Jeaffreson's character it is not easy to speak; perhaps most difficult to those who knew him best. One may name this quality or that, but in the analysis the rare charm of the personality eludes us and evades description. A stranger, seeing him for the first time, would be struck by his courtesy, warmed and kindled by cordiality and brotherly kindness, and brightened by his delightful humour. It has been mentioned as one of the characteristics of a saint, that he is apt to appear to have no use for his time if it is possible for him to do you a service; this in his case was profoundly true. He held, not only theoretically, but practically, the unity of all men and all creatures in one Centre, and his kindness went out to all: to a starved, ugly cat, perhaps, which looked as if no one had ever caressed it before; to an ill-used, emaciated donkey, which he bought that it might die in comfort, and which revived into health and strength; to an Italian organ-grinder in Kilburn, who was a dear friend; to strangers and the unattractive, as well as to the most cultured and delightful people, he gave himself in some degree to all. It may be permitted to quote in this connection from an article which appeared in an Australian periodical, giving the impression which he produced upon a passing traveller: "Finding ourselves in Florence on a Sunday morning, we took our way to one of the English churches. The sermon was full of thought and culture, delivered with quiet earnestness. . . . The sermon ended, we determined to lunch at a café in some country place, and chose Fiesole. A small crowd waited for the tram. We joined ourselves to it, wondering about the distance,

the fare, and the chances of making ourselves understood. Suddenly the preacher of the morning drew near; we spoke to him, and were immediately taken under his protection; he lived at Fiesole, he said, and he would like us to take tea with him at the Villa degli Angeli after we had seen the little town overlooking the Val d'Arno. The tram careered up at a great pace through a southern vegetation, lit up by the most gorgeous colours, enwrapped in the insistent blue of an Italian sky. . . . Our friend showed us the monastery of Fiesole, where Fra Angelico learnt religion before he went to San Marco to paint it in immortal pictures.

“The car dives down into a valley where Boccaccio wandered, his quick fancy busy with the composition of his tales; it mounts to the little town at the top of the hill, from which Dante said farewell to his native city, and draws up in the small piazza. In the afternoon, by winding paths and along aged garden walls, by ancient villas on the side of the hill, we came to the Villa degli Angeli. The villa was a cosmopolis that afternoon; English, American, and Australian people were to be found on the terrace and in the drawing-room; for there is no English church in Fiesole, and the Bishop of Gibraltar has given permission to our friend to hold services for his household and invited friends. The villa had long ago been a convent; our host had restored and adorned the chapel; there he was accustomed to celebrate the Eucharist, there we said Evensong with him; there we heard from his lips an address, the expression of a cultivated mind, and of a heart warm with religious ardour; he was a true priest of the Most High. Afterwards how genial the conversation! how world-embracing the interests! We tore ourselves away with regret, and reached again the hotel by the Arno.”

The little chapel in the villa became a centre of influence and help ; through it he reached many who would hardly otherwise have come in contact with such aid, and who owe to it more than they can express. But he never confined his sympathies to those of his own communion. He threw himself into Italian life and thought with keen interest, and had many friends among both clergy and laity. His article on Modernism in the *Church Quarterly Review* showed how he could appreciate both sides in the controversy, and many Modernists, perplexed and distressed by the action of the Papal authority, were kept patient and loyal to their Church by his wise counsel. It may be well to mention here that his wide human interest in all with whom he came in contact never hindered his power of individual friendship ; he was a friend of friends ; no one who had the privilege of his special friendship ever felt lost in a crowd ; he gave himself to each one as perhaps to no other. As intercourse developed, it was seen how wide his interests were : art, science, poetry, history, public affairs, all had their place, but all were irradiated from one Centre, and drew their significance from their relation to it. With this wideness of interest he combined on many subjects full and exact knowledge. This is illustrated by the fact that he undertook the section "Central Italy" in Mr. Murray's Guidebook, a task obviously involving detailed artistic and practical information. This is not the place for dwelling on what his marriage was to him, but it is hardly possible to touch upon his home and social life without alluding to the personality which had so much to do with creating its atmosphere. The following letters will speak for themselves of his help and guidance of souls, showing deliberate judgment and sanity of thought combined with delicate sympathy.

He published, besides his book on the Divine Unity and Trinity, a volume of Retreat addresses on the Magnificat, two short courses of sermons on the Holy Eucharist preached in Florence, and a book on the Holy Catholic Church. It was his great desire to write one more, on the remaining and last clauses of the Apostles' Creed, and for this he had accumulated much material; but during the last two or three years of his life his health failed more and more, and it was impossible for him to arrange his MSS. and shape them into a whole. One of his friends, who knew how keen his desire to finish this work had been, spoke to him in the last months of his life of the trial to him of having to relinquish it, just as he might have been hoping for its completion, but he would hardly allow it. If it had been God's will that it should have been finished, well and good. But it had not been. He had learnt the lesson that "God does not need our work, but He does want our will: who withholds that gives nothing; who gives it, gives all." Of the innermost devotion of his life it would be presumptuous to speak: when we reach the shrine where such a soul offers its supreme love and worship, silence and reverence are the most fitting attitude.

In his lovely home at Fiesole he lay through much of the last year of his life at the point of death. During that time he had the great comfort and help of a last visit from his friend the Rev. W. B. Trevelyan, Warden of Liddon House. He rallied to some extent after this, and was able to be moved to Viareggio; but he spent only a day or two among the pinewoods by the sea, then the call came suddenly, and he passed on into the Life beyond.

K. G.

LETTERS OF SPIRITUAL COUNSEL AND ADVICE

THE APPREHENSION OF THE LOVE OF GOD

I HAVE kept your letter five weeks or more, not only because I have been busy, but chiefly because I hardly knew how to answer it. To me the quiet assurance of a Love encompassing me, which I cannot measure or feel, and very seldom remember, is much more comfort and support than any occasional keen recognition of it. It is the difference between the passionate joy of betrothal, and the tranquil, hardly noticed happiness of marriage. That which I feel very keenly seems to have something of the superficiality and transitoriness of me who feel. What I do not feel but know to exist, belongs to the massive chords which underlie the more variable melody.

But I may be wrong, or different people have different wants, as we "know in part." To me, the knowledge of the Love of God is like the wealth which I may have with my banker; not seen, not counted, or carried about, but always in the background as a ground of consciousness of wealth. Others may, quite rightly, prefer to have it in sovereigns or in jewels.

But I suspect that if God revealed too much of His Love to us, He would paralyse us, just as would be the case if He revealed too much of His Will, or His power, or His purpose for the future. We can only

grow up in a modulated sunshine. "The sun shall not smite thee by day." We might be so delighted with the revelation that we should be dazzled and forget "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," as perhaps Satan forgot, who, seeing God, fell. It is with this, perhaps, as it is with other truth, if it were entirely clear, we should lose the discipline of seeking it. There is no moral discipline in believing the multiplication table; it is a discipline of life which enables us to believe in such higher, and therefore obscure, things, as God's existence and love. If atheism were not possible, there would be no moral value in the Creed. I should think we are deeply conscious of our neighbour's love just because he is, to some extent, separate from us, and his love has in it something of a shock and a surprise. "How wonderful that he should thus feel for me." But there is nothing truly wonderful in God's Love for us. It is but natural, He being what He is and we His creatures and children. Its proper way of revelation is not from outside (in special mercies, healing, etc., which we only need at all because we block the inner channel), but from within—through the spirit, which is God's dwelling-place. No doubt if we were more spiritual, we should be more conscious of the dwelling of God in our spirits. But as we are, I suppose we cannot see our true selves, or what is in them, very clearly. Every man is conscious of his love for his wife or his horse or picture; but how seldom are we conscious of our love for ourselves. And God is more inward to us than even our spirits. They are our cells of protoplasm and His Word is the germ of them. If we are so ignorant of our own spirits, how likely we are to confuse them with the indwelling God. So I suppose our wisest way is to look for the manifestation

of Him where there is less chance of mistake—in His Presence not so much in us as around us—in His commandments (in the way of which we wait for Him), in His Church, in His people, in whom we can serve Him. I fancy the question of importance is not, “What do I realise of the Love of God?” but “How do I obey so much as I realise of it?” And in obedience one does find consciousness of love increase, because we come to love (*i.e.* we are conscious of God loving in us) some good thing or hate some evil thing; not God and we agreeing to love the same thing, but God in me and I in God, loving and hating. Here I have written pages and said nothing, for indeed I know nothing about the subject. Only this, that if God is Love, the Incarnation prepares us to find the revelation of Love quite as much a concealment for the time as a disclosure. There would be something almost Apollinarian about expecting Love to shine through the darkness at once. In this respect, as in all else, the birth comes first, and then the growth, and not till then the unfolding of the perfect type. It may be enough for us now to have twilight, so long as we are waiting in faith for the perfect day.

THE MATURING OF LOVE

I think it is one of the best lessons of the years as they pass, that good things get more and more detached from the outer things which seem at first to interpret God's love to us, but which, as our experience of that love grows firmer, can safely be taken away, as the scaffold is taken away from the building. God grant that the Building not made with hands may grow more and more splendid as this year passes on.

PROGRESS IN SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Thank you for telling me about your experience of God's support minute by minute. Of course one has long known that it is true; but knowing and experiencing are very different things, and rightly so, for there is an order in His teaching of us. Sinai could not rightly be the mountain of the Sermon; nor that again the mountain of the Transfiguration; nor even that the mountain of the Ascension. At first we must know what God is, then what He did, lastly what He does. It is all the same truth, discerned as we reach different stages. I suppose we are all inclined to accept first the truth at which the Deists stopped—that "God spake once;" though we are in danger of the Deist's error of forgetting that He is ever speaking, so that we live not by one word alone, but by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." But it is blessed when "twice I have heard the same," not only that "power belongeth unto God" but also that "Thou, Lord, art merciful." Lastly comes the understanding of that Mercy, "for Thou renderest to every man according to his work." I have had some similar thoughts presented to me in preparing a course of Lenten sermons on Ps. cxxx. You will have noticed that it is not only the 6th Penitential Psalm, but also the 11th Song of Degrees; when the singer has gone much more than half-way to the City of God; though he has not yet reached the babe-like patience of the 12th degree (Ps. cxxxi.) and does not yet trust though the needed food is withdrawn. If one looks in this way at Ps. cxxx., what is the "deep"? Not, I think, the hopeless confusion of him who, brought to the conviction of desperate sin, fears that there is no escape; but rather the "deep" of Gen. i. 1—the

nothingness of the creature and of all its efforts, until or unless the "Spirit of God moves on" it. No beginner in penitence could say verse 4. I suspect there are few who can say it; but it is an infinite blessing to be told by the old pilgrim what he has seen, and what we shall see, too, if we persevere. Meanwhile we may now and then catch a glimpse of what we are to see; and I thank God that you have your glimpses.

PROGRESS IN PRAYER

You ask a question about prayer which perplexes many people. As far as I can see, the answer probably lies in this direction. When we begin to pray, we pray very imperfectly, setting our hearts on our own desires, and endeavouring to obtain them from God. This is very imperfect, but it is all we are capable of at that period; and God deals gently with our immaturity, and gives both a spirit of gladness in prayer, and also many evident answers to it. But if He did so permanently, He would be encouraging us to remain in infancy. A child who is beginning to learn music, is encouraged and praised by her mother, because her blunders are inevitable, and she does the best she can; but in course of time she ought to do better, and then her mother ceases to praise her very imperfect work, lest she should encourage her to be self-satisfied in imperfection. So God makes it harder to pray, and does not often seem to give what is prayed for, because He wishes to lead us on to more perfect prayer, which is not the asking of what we desire, but of what He desires. "My will be done" is the inevitable beginning; but we must be reaching after "Thy will be

done." I suppose a real saint asks for nothing else. We do, and then God slights us, as it were, to make us discontented and to urge us on. We may wisely ask ourselves, "What should I pray for if I had a painful and incurable disease? relief or patience?" And if we have reason to fear that it would be chiefly relief, then we may carry the thought to our actual subjects of prayer, and ask whether we are still, like children, asking for what we desire, or whether we are pushing forward to the prayer of saints, and trying to leave ourselves in God's hands, only exerting our wills to the end of willing what God wills, and so being used by Him as not mechanical but willing instruments. One might imagine a person saying, "I wish I could pray with more delight; but if God wills to refuse me this delight, then I will still pray that, whatever He sends me, I may gladly accept it." This is a high ideal, but we should press on to it, because God has much work to do in rooting out our selfishness, and selfishness has a way of lurking even in the highest things.

I suppose there is a natural shrinking from death which even some great saints have felt, and that this is not sinful, though it needs discipline. If we realised that God cares for us more than we care for ourselves, that in all worlds He is Lord and will provide for us, then, though we shall still have the natural fear perhaps, we shall not give way to it. The true man is not he who does not feel fear, but he who is not swayed by it.

Faith is an infused grace—a gift, which must be asked for, and then used. The disciples prayed well, "Lord, increase our faith." When asked for, it is given ("Ask and ye shall have"). And then we must use it, resolutely striving against doubt, not that we

may attain to faith, but because we have it. Every Communion, for instance, in giving us Christ, gives us Faith; then we should meet a trouble in the strength of the faith which we have. My father said to me, "When you want money, ask me for it." What would he have thought if I had left his cheque folded up in my pocket, and then gone about complaining that I was so poor, I could not buy a dinner? I think people often fail to see the real character of Faith, Hope, and Love. They are the Divine Life, and therefore given to us when that Life is given to us in Christ, as in Baptism, Holy Communion, etc. That is God's work: then ours begins—to use the gifts.

WANDERINGS IN PRAYER

I think wanderings in prayer must be treated according to their causes. Sometimes they arise from bodily causes (headache, lassitude, etc.), and then they should be regarded as a Cross. Do the best you can to surmount them; but if, after all effort, they remain, do not think of them as really spoiling prayer. God sees your will to pray.

But more often they arise from some moral defect, such as unbraced faith, self-absorption, wilful irritation. Try to trace them to their source. "Why could I not pray to-day? Was it not because I was set on my own way, and would not accept God's? Was it not because I failed to lift up my heart to God, and did not try to put away self-centred thoughts? Was it not because I brooded over my cares, and was not prepared to cast them on Him?" If you can find out the cause, the remedy is usually clear, though it may take time and trouble to apply it. If the cause is not evident, still

it probably lies in some such direction, and one cannot do amiss by taking such precautions as these. Remain quiet a few minutes before prayer, trying to remember God's presence, your right to draw near in Christ, the promised power of the Holy Ghost: think over your petitions before you ask them: "Is this just what I ought to desire and ask for? or is it self-will?" Then kneel (~~it is better to reserve this attitude for the actual petition~~), and make your requests known, breaking them up with occasional acts of recollection of God, of faith in Him, of submission, and especially of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is wings to prayer. And having done your best, leave the prayer to God. There may be pride in criticising it, as if it were to meet your own approval rather than God's. Be prepared that your prayer should be very imperfect: what of ours is not?

That residuum of godlessness which we discover after we have (to our best power) tried to remember our sins in detail, is quite true. It is like the general ill-health to which one cannot give a name, but which makes sometimes our heads, sometimes our feet, unfit for work. Try simply and quietly if you can find out more about it and its causes, and then leave it to Him. "If our heart condemn us (showing certain sins), God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." It is our one hope that He knows more of us than we do, for what He knows He wills to cure. The doctor knows what underlies our dimness of sight, our weariness of brain, our feebleness of feet. He usually gives food and tonics. The best tonic is a bracing of ourselves to think more of God and less of self: our best food is in the Word and Sacraments.

Don't worry over self-examination; perform it quietly and trustfully, as one whom God searches and

knows. It will be imperfect at best. He will show you as much as it is good for you to know.

Forgetfulness of counsel at Confession is as often the priest's fault (poor expression, bad arrangement), as the penitent's. Remember what you can, write it down, claim the Holy Spirit to enlighten your conscience.

In all things, avoid spiritual worry. Trust God; you are not dealing with an Egyptian taskmaster. Never leave off prayer, etc., with the thought of self: end with adoration, thanks, acts of faith.

As to fasting, you must take what is provided, and use punctually a very mild form of discipline. Health and circumstances are God's ordering.

HINTS ON PRAYER

I think your difficulty about prayer is a very common one, and perhaps there is no single remedy for it. I will give a few suggestions as to exercises which are found helpful.

1. Get into the way of reminding yourself that little incidents of daily life are of interest to God. "It is He who sent me this difficulty about the cook." "He cares much more for my sick child than I do."

This habit seems to help in two ways:—

i. It enables me to bridge over what seems a gap between God and those daily anxieties which necessarily form a great element of our prayers. It becomes less strange to tell God about our little cares.

ii. It prevents these little things from rising to intrude upon us when we are turning our minds to higher things.

2. Be careful to have a fixed time and place, as far as you can.

3. Prepare for prayer by a few seconds' reflection : "God is here. I dare to speak to Him because I am a member of His Son. I can do this by the help of the Holy Ghost. Lord have mercy : hear me. Christ have mercy : join my prayers with Thine. Lord have mercy, inspire me." Do not always use the same thoughts in preparation, yet use again and again those which you have found helpful to you.

4. Interrupt your prayers from time to time, as it may be needful, with such acts of faith as are in No. 3.

5. Study order in prayer. Either use a book, or else have a scheme of prayer : *e.g.* acts of recollection ; invocation ; thanksgiving ; prayer for pardon, for grace ; prayers for others. Whatever is done well, is done in order.

6. If some distraction presses into prayers, stop a few moments, pray over it, and then leave it in God's hands, and go on with prayers in order.

7. Remember always that prayer is a supernatural work : we cannot do it by ourselves : it is the special gift of the Holy Ghost, and must be asked of Him in assurance of faith.

8. Don't judge your prayers by the amount of conscious devotion. There may be less real devotion in the few fervent easy prayers of Monday than when on Tuesday you struggle to bend your will and to fix your mind, and rise unrefreshed. God is the judge and He regards not the luxuriance of prayer, but its sincerity and unselfishness.

9. Many people find it a help to keep a little book in which to write down things to pray for and also expressions (*e.g.* from a Psalm) which give due words to a prayer.

10. It is often easier to give thanks than to pray, and to pray for others rather than yourself. It is generally best, I think, to begin with the easier exercises.

11. We must not be surprised if we cannot rival the saints in prayer. Let us be faithful "in that which is least."

PRAYER AND SELF-EXAMINATION

I know very well what you tell me of the distaste for prayer, as if it were knocking at a closed door. It comes, I suppose, from the delusion that the door is closed—forgetting the "new and living way through the veil." Perhaps we are almost more tempted to pray by ourselves than to work by ourselves; and we need to stir up the remembrance that we pray as members of Christ and therefore children of God. It has seemed to me a helpful exercise to say slowly before prayer: "Glory be to the Father," *to* whom I pray: "and to the Son," *in* whom I pray: "and to the Holy Ghost," *by* whose power I pray.

Then, next, I think the art of prayer is learned best by praying about the things in which one is most interested—the perplexity which requires light, the pupil's character which requires wisdom. Don't mistake want of fervour for want of prayer. You may not feel much interest, and yet be doing your best. No doubt in a perfect prayer, or any other perfect act, feeling will go hand in hand with duty; but then we are confessedly far from perfection. Meanwhile what God requires of us is not emotion but obedience.

We are very like musical instruments out of tune. One string is too flat, another too sharp, one greatly

wrong, another only a little : the whole harmony jarred. But we have at least the perfect chord struck in the character of our Lord, and our life's work is to get into tune with Him. Make that part of your self-examination to think how Christ would have acted in your place. "I spoke ill of X.: Christ was silent about Judas. I gave up my prayers because I was tired: Christ prayed a whole night in the storm. I fretted against orders: Christ was subject till the age of thirty;" and so forth. Then a prayer: "Lord Jesus, who hast shown me the true example, give me Thy Holy Spirit that I may follow Thee."

In such a way I do certainly think it useful to examine one's whole life. No doubt, with the best care, one will forget scores of details; but then all we do is similarly imperfect. *E.g.* in studying history one forgets many dates, yet you would teach a pupil that chronology is the methodising of history. You will at least know much more after such an examination than you could have known without it. And you may have discovered a clue to certain deeply seated tendencies which spring up in various forms. Conceit for instance, may show itself in irritability, in falsehood, in affectation, and a hundred other forms.

I think the simplest and best way is to provide yourself with a list of questions on the Commandments and with some paper. Divide your life into sections—*e.g.* before school, at school, after school, and write them down. Then say the Whitsunday Collect kneeling. Then sit down, and take the first question, and ask yourself, "Used I to do this in the first period? often? after warning?" and write down what you remember, very briefly: and so with the second period etc. If any question evidently does not touch you, pass it by with thanks that you have not been tempted in that

direction. Don't spend more than 10 to 15 minutes a day in this way; but let the time be as regular as you can—*e.g.* from 10 to 10.15. Before leaving off, kneel with your written paper, and say, "I confess, Lord, that when I was a child I frequently sinned by Z.; still more frequently at school, especially when I was X. years old; several times since I left school, about five times in the last year. Lord, I compare myself with Thee, whose example is so unlike my acts. I am ashamed of myself, and beg Thy pardon, and resolve to watch more against this sin of Z."

Of course you would keep the notes under lock and key. As you proceed with them you will probably come to see how the same root-fault lies under different faults at different times of life: *e.g.* conceit may have made one disobedient in childhood, boastful at school, contemptuous in after life. This root-fault is what one must specially have in mind to watch and pray against.

When the examination is completed it would be well to set apart a quiet time of one or two hours, spend them in church, and go over the whole result before God, breaking up your Confession with prayers for forgiveness, thanks for temptations overcome, resolutions, acts of comparison of self with Christ, and the like.

After one such thorough self-examination it will usually be enough to ask one's self just three or four questions at night: *e.g.* Did I rise early? Say my prayers carefully? Do my work honestly? Is there anything special on my conscience?

I think you would be helped by Bishop Wilkinson's "Break up your Fallow Ground" (Wells Gardner, 3d.). Don't let its high standard depress you. It is what we must aim at, not what we may hope at once to attain.

I cannot but think that such an examination is what you need. If one's accounts are in a muddle, the only way is to take pains to put them straight. And unless we know our sins we cannot confess them : unless we confess them we have no right to expect the forgiveness of them. Moreover, one cannot rightly come to God except in the humble spirit of one who seeks pardon from a loving Father ; not in the rather restless and angry spirit of one who feels that everything is amiss, but does not try to get right.

PRAYER AND PROVIDENCE

It is certainly not the Christian notion of prayer that we wish to instruct God as to what we need, or that we wish to induce Him to do what He would otherwise neglect to do. But it is to be observed that, in other ways, the Will of God is not inconsistent with the agency of the human will. For instance, it is God's will to give the crops ; yet He is pleased to make His gift more or less conditional on the farmer doing his share. It is God who heals the sick ; but He allows a share in the good work to the doctor and the nurse. Just so, He wills to give us good things ; but He also wills that we should bring our own wills into action by prayer. Of course we are often ignorant what we should ask for ; and we always pray "if it be God's will" ; but the farmer is in the same case, for he does not know whether the season will permit corn to grow : yet he does not hesitate to perform his part of ploughing and sowing.

Modern psychology brings into evidence the vast importance of the human will. Many diseases are caused and cured by it. And if there be a Will at the

root of natural phenomena—if the laws of rain, for instance, be really laws, that is to say, if they involve a mind which imposes them—it does not seem strange that the human mind and will may have some share in the regulation of them. It is, after all, the mind of the farmer which conditions his acts; and if his indolent or stupid mind modifies the growth of his crop, there seems to me nothing unreasonable in the position that the mind and will of man have a part in the cure of disease, the conduct of politics, and other things for which we pray. If, for instance, my will can do something towards turning out the present Government by votes and agitation, why should I not have a similar power of affecting politics by my prayer?

The only difference between the cases seems to lie in this, that in prayer my mind must be more humbly free from the thought of over-ruling God's Will. The farmer may be an unbeliever, and may think he is the original source of natural law. He who prays is led by the very nature of his act to remember that his business is not to control or to over-rule God's will, but to co-operate with it. But this difference is not in the operation of the human will, but in the temper in which that operation is effected. An atheist may plough, and so modify the crops; only a believer can pray, and he is less likely to think of modifying the course of law than of co-operating in it. In this he seems to take a more modest, and a more true, view of the relation of the human will to the Divine.

When we offer the Holy Sacrifice for such an object, the operation is of the same sort. We do not think of buying from God by our sacrifice a benefit which He would else refuse. Our sacrifice is one of "praise and thanksgiving," and it is just because we are convinced

of the good-will of our God towards us that we offer up our wills, not merely to submit to what cannot be changed, but rather to co-operate with that good purpose which we partially discern.

Prayer, then, assumes a conviction of God's good-will towards us, in which He allows us to take a part in carrying it out. If we are convinced that a thing is contrary to God's Will, it would be blasphemy to pray for it. It would be blasphemy if we were to throw ourselves over a precipice, and pray that we might not be hurt. But there are not many cases in which we can be so sure of His purpose. I do not know whether it is His will to give rain next week ; and so, if I desire it, I may rightly pray for it. If it is not His will, I am content to be disappointed. If it is His, I shall be occupying the place which He offers to me in bringing it about.

I think, indeed, that as we grow in trust in God we are likely to pray less and less for such things as rain ; and this for two reasons. First, we are likely to care less for such things as rain, when we have learned to care for nobler things. Secondly, we shall have attained such a conviction of our ignorance and God's wise goodness that we shall feel that we have said all that we care to say when we have said, "Thy will be done." The things which we shall chiefly pray for will be such as holiness, patience, etc., about which we are sure that they are really to be desired, and that it is God's will to give them. But this does not mean that prayer for earthly blessings is futile or wrong ; but only that it belongs to an imperfect state.

PRAYER FOR TEMPORAL BLESSINGS

I do not think these disasters ought to disturb us as to our prayers for those who travel. We do not, of course, in any prayer wish to dictate to God as to the way in which He should show His love, or to persuade Him to do what He might not have done. I suppose that our prayers for temporal blessings have a twofold scope : first, they express *our desire* that His will should be done, and not merely our acquiescence in it as a thing which we cannot avoid ; and, secondly, we offer our wills to God as instruments to carry out His will, if He thinks well so to use them. It is He alone who restores health, yet He provides room for the skill of the doctor to co-operate with Him ; it is He alone who gives fruits of the field, yet the farmer has his part in the production of them. In both these cases He makes use of men's intelligence and will, not dealing with us as mere machines. Who can tell that our prayers for travellers may have been answered by a thought put into some person's mind not to travel by the boat which was wrecked ; or by the courage inspired into the rescuers ? Nor, if the winds are His messengers and not merely mechanical things working apart from the living God, can I see any improbability that our wills (which we express in prayer) may be allowed some play in the blowing of the wind and the restraint of it. Once grasp that nature is not a dead machine, but an expression of the Mind of God, and that our wills are akin to His, though subordinate ; and there seems no difficulty in believing that our wills have such a share as He is pleased to reserve for us in moving the forces of nature.

Again, though these poor travellers were drowned,

may not our prayers have been answered by brave, gentle, unselfish thoughts put into their minds in their peril? It may be impossible to trace the way in which our wills, expressed in prayer, have worked for good, just as it is impossible to trace the way in which the charity of countless obscure souls has aided some great benevolent work, such as the abolition of slavery; yet it is certain that Wilberforce and Buxton would not have been able to carry their reform, if there had not been a host of quiet unknown persons set in the same direction. Our wills may be small, like rain-drops, yet each drop forms part of the shower. And when we pray, we are putting our wills into line with the Will of God, and taking up the place He reserves for us.

I read once a letter written by a lady who had been wrecked in the Atlantic; her husband had been crushed by the falling of a mast, and her baby had been washed out of her arms: but she wrote that at no time in her life had she been filled with so perfect a sense of God's loving presence. Perhaps some of the poor people on the *Berlin* may have had some such experience, and perhaps this may have been won for them through our prayers.

THE DISCIPLINE OF DISILLUSIONMENT

I cannot but think that God is letting you have now a portion of that discipline, profitable but very painful, which may be in store for us after death. The sense of "entanglement in self" could hardly come until one was able to see that thought of self is an entanglement. Young people can hardly know this. The discovery of self, and all its claims, is for

a time so pressing, and, in a way, so rightly urgent. *My life, my needs, my powers*, fill almost all the mind. This is, I suppose, the reason why young people are often so egotistic. Then comes a period of painful disillusionment. *My life* is proved to be such a failure, *my needs* so much less pressing than those of others, *my powers* so disappointingly limited. With some people, apparently, the painful discovery is put aside. They will not face it, as many people will not face poverty or death. They get a sort of quietude which they call peace. But if one has courage to bear the pain, it may be the avenue to real peace in the truth. God is preparing such high things for us, that what we have already received may seem even poorer than it is. It is not really poor in its place; it is the "blade," if not the "ear," still less the "full corn in the ear." I should suppose that, in the world to come, a great discovery will be the poverty of the past. Even the best things in it, even its best aims, will seem so worthless. They are not worthless, for they are necessary in their place; but when we have passed that place, they will seem as childish as the books from which we first learned to spell and to count. But even our works in the flesh must be precious, if God will judge us according to them; for He does not judge us on account of what is really worthless, but of what is worth reckoning in its place.

We do not examine a child as to his silly fancies, but as to the real knowledge, however elementary, he may have acquired. Even he who can say "I have done that which was appointed to me to do," will still know himself an "unprofitable servant"; how much more those who have often left undone what was appointed?

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 I am sure St. Paul was speaking of his present experience, and not casting his thought back to his unconverted days, when he cried "Wretched man that I am ; who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " God will deliver us, and is delivering us ; and perhaps a great part of the deliverance will be the sense of the imperfection of the life in the flesh ; calls neglected before the journey to Damascus, hopes formed and abandoned, hot words with Barnabas, and one knows not what other imperfections, which even a St. Paul must have had. Death will be a great deliverance for those who are seeking freedom. How different his life, trials, failures must seem when he looks back on them from his new standpoint ! But if he knows the wound, he also knows the cure : " Thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." If on the one hand his retrospect is a painful one over human frailty, on the other side it is full of hope. God has given His Son, the Son has accepted Paul as his servant (" Lord " implies " servant "). So thanks to God, Who will fulfil His work. So I suppose, our wisdom after death (and now also, so far as we are sharing the discipline of purgatory), will be not to allow ourselves to dwell too much on failures. Some of them were wilful, some inevitable at the time (as a person is not ashamed of finding false spelling in a letter written in childhood ; he could do no other-wise then) ; some again, so mingled with better efforts that no eye but God's can disentangle effort and failure ; but in all cases St. Paul urges " Give thanks." There may be something carnal even in dwelling on fleshly faults. We should cling to Him Who, whatever our failures, has not failed us, nor will fail us. It might be almost as unworthy for Israel in the wilderness to look back to Egyptian bondage as to Egyptian flesh-

pots. "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously." One does indeed need intense contrition, humility and surrender, if one is to keep alive; but one needs still more intense faith in Him Who quickens. I would suggest that, letting contrition do its proper work, you should be careful to keep it in its true place as the "digging," out of which fruit will come by the Spirit of life Who is in us (St. Luke. xiii. 8). So our prayer should be the disciple's prayer, "Lord, add faith to us."

FEELINGS

I have kept ever since November a letter of yours which I did not answer at once, because I wanted to think over it. I am always inclined to look upon feelings with suspicion as soon as we begin to reflect upon them. They are valuable as motives, but dangerous as objects of contemplation. As soon as we begin to analyse them, they are apt to take illusive forms; and for this reason: that they are not *things*, but only the manner in which things affect the personality. The personality and the things are each progressing in different directions, only cutting each other's orbit occasionally, as comets cut the orbit of the earth. Acts are different. The creative power with which God has endowed us, manifests itself in our acts, which remain fixed and irrevocable and are therefore proper objects of knowledge and judgment. If we begin to reflect on our feelings, either we follow the course of the succession of outward things, and make our life to consist in the things which we have, or else we follow the succession of our own perceptive states, and make self the centre of

life; *i.e.* we are in danger of becoming frivolous or else self-centred, or perhaps both alternately. I should say then that you might put out of sight your feelings of indifference towards people, and act as not indifferent, serving them; and leave the feeling to God, Who alone can see and judge them. Of course, if one had reason to be sure that one had said a kind thing which one in no sense meant, just to be thought kind, or for the like reason—one would condemn oneself, not because one's feelings were deficient, but because one had not acted sincerely. But surely one may deal with one's friends as one deals with God. Often when we say "I heartily repent" we are not sure that we mean more than "I wish to repent." So, when one says to a friend "I grieve with your grief," one may rightly mean "I wish I could feel your grief, though I am not sure that I do." You know my favourite verse in Hebrews, "Looking *away* unto Jesus;" that is the true translation. I should fancy that too much criticism of feelings is a natural temptation of thoughtful people in poor health. I suspect a physiologist could give some account of it as a supra-normal excitation of the sensory (feeling) part of our being.

IRRITABILITY

I think we must be very watchful against habits of irritability, etc., which often increase in old age. Sometimes they are perhaps merely physical, and cannot be overcome; they are part of the entire dissolution of man which is the path to his restoration. But often they would be kept in order, if in earlier days we resolutely studied to be patient and thankful.

Be diligent in thanksgiving. Meet with it the temptation to depression. We are in God's hands, and no harm shall touch us.

SELF-SACRIFICE AND RELUCTANCE

(St. John xxi. 17.) St. Peter might well have hoped that before the end of his life his will would be so disciplined in the art of obedience, that whatever God required of him would be done gladly. His energetic temperament reminded him of the joy of action. Yet our Lord, even in the course of his absolution, taught him that it would not be so. His obedience was even then to be rather negative than positive; being girt and led by others. Even to the end it would be "whither thou wouldest not." It was still to be in some way forced by external constraint. Yet by this martyrdom against his will he should "glorify God." Perhaps as we grow older, the irksomeness of duty will not grow less; it may even grow more, as natural strength diminishes, and the temper grows less sanguine. But after all, the sacrifice which God demands of us is the sacrifice of the will. It may be the more acceptable, just because it continues to be irksome. It might be less selfish, and therefore more worthy, to be led against the will to martyrdom than to rush to it gladly. The one thing for us to be concerned about is the performance of the duty. Even our Lord's will had to give way to the will of His Father. It should not disquiet us to find that the duty is still irksome, provided it is fulfilled. We do not wish for a time when we should no longer need the Holy Spirit to constrain us; or if we wish it, it is a sign of a Pelagian temper still unsubdued. It is the triumph of Grace which we desire; and if

Grace rather drags us than leads us to the Altar, yet if it does enable us to offer sacrifice, it is enough. The reluctance which remains, reminds us of the resistance which it has overcome. Grace has overcome so much that we may wait till another world for its supreme victory, when we shall awake after His likeness and be satisfied, *i.e.* duty will be found to coincide with inclination. I believe this consolation is true; but to use it truly two things are needed; first, to be sure that a thing is duty, not only a good work, but a good work which God hath prepared for us to walk in; and secondly, that however reluctantly, we do walk in it. It is a very great practical difficulty to know whether this or that good work is really fit for us, or whether God withdraws it from us by means of bodily weakness. To solve this question I know no method but to cast ourselves upon the Holy Spirit Who is promised to lead us into all truth, and to try difficult questions again and again, with a full preparation to find that what God required of us in our health, He does not require of us in our weakness; and where we suspect that He has ceased to desire it, rather to substitute for it some other good work which we can do, than simply to abandon it; *e.g.*, to read the Bible instead of meditating, when the brain is somewhat exhausted. And in all to think little of ourselves, and much of the Judgment of God, Who knows the righteousness of our desire, and the weakness of the flesh which hinders us from performing what we would do, as we did it in days of greater vigour.

I have been working hard at Job and have written the most important part; considering how the Theophany really answers Job's demand. The answer seems at first unworthy: God is great and wonderful, therefore hold thou thy peace. But I suspect the real

purport of the answer is much deeper. Job has felt that if only he could get sight of God, he would find his perplexity solve itself. Well then, he is told to see God in His works, and to grow familiar with Him in one of His attributes, because God is one, and he who knows Him in part, is on the way to knowing Him altogether. To know His might is the road to knowing His justice, because Might and Justice are not really separable from Himself, or therefore from one another. It is another case of what I have spoken of elsewhere, that God teaches usually not by direct answer to our questions, but by familiarising us with Himself, and in augmented light leaving us to work out the answer for ourselves.

GENTLENESS WITH ONE OF DIFFERENT VIEWS

I remember something about your friend, and feel quite sure that you are right in going with her to X. It is not like going to a dissenting chapel to please her. That would be doing wrong (as we Church people discern it), in order that good may come; because we cannot think that schismatical Services are ordained by God, or that we, who are instructed, could please Him by attending them. But the Services at X. are as much ordained by God as those at St. Augustine's. One may regret that they lack some reverent customs, and we may think that they are less in accordance with the Prayer-book; but, after all, these are points for the clergy to consider, and you may put them aside as not your affair. The Service is the true Eucharist which our Lord ordained; and you may be very thankful your friend goes with you, and go without the least scruple with her.

Nor do I think you need blame yourself for shrinking from discussion. It would probably do no good, unless she were in a teachable frame of mind. Of course there may be occasions in which you should gently assert your convictions, as, *e.g.*, in case she should urge you to communicate with her after food; then you would say that fasting is the unbroken habit of the Church to show reverence, and you cannot, without real necessity, break it. But for the most part the gentle practice of the Catholic Religion without words will have most effect. It will not stimulate her to contradict, and it is very likely that in time she will ask questions not for the sake of showing how "narrow" we are, but for the sake of really learning. I am sure you are very thankful that she has returned to Holy Communion, and your thankfulness will make you both patient and hopeful.

REVIEW OF THE PAST

Such a recovery (from an illness) has in it something of a resurrection, and therefore of a call to fresh purpose and fresh hope. I often wonder how our old life will appear to us after death. No doubt there will be much to make us ashamed; but I cannot but think that, as our state after death is chiefly spoken of as rest, the predominant thought will be, how, in spite of our silliness and unfaithfulness, God has been about our path and has used our weaknesses to perfect in a degree His Strength. I am more and more sure that it is not wise to dwell too much on faults, especially those caused by our ignorance and incapacity; or at least that in doing so, it is right to bear in mind that God intentionally made use of faulty persons. I have a small bundle of sermons written in 1872, and when I

looked at them some time ago, I was ashamed of their crudity, wondering how people could have sat still to listen to them; yet I know that some of them were blessed. I think you may rightly have the same sort of thoughts about conduct to your friend, which you now see to have been injudicious. It was perhaps the best you could do at the time, though you may now have the painful task of unsaying what you said then.

MORBID CONSCIENCE

I think a morbidly sensitive conscience has two marks: it is unbalanced, and it is unprogressive. It is unbalanced, if it leads one to dwell so much on faults as to obscure the thought of grace. We are poor things at best, but what should we have been but for the grace of God? If God does not think our faults unfit us for a work, why should we think so? If the multiplicity of faults perplexes us, the best help is to be found in doing the work He allots, in renewed desire to glorify Him. It is not morbid to think much of "little sins"; but it is morbid to forget constant grace. And then a morbid conscience is unprogressive: it makes us miserable about faults, but does not stimulate us to overcome them. Our faults necessarily take time to overcome. They are not gross things (like drunkenness) which one can break off with a single brave resolution. We must "bring forth fruit with patience."

I should not aim at a less careful analysis of self, but rather at balancing it with very regular thanksgiving. You remember, say, that you spoke rashly to-day; but remember (that you may thank God) that His grace restrained you from saying what was untrue

or unkind; or that He stopped you before you went far; or enabled you to retract what you had said amiss; etc., etc. And then turn your failure into resolution: "To-morrow, when I am talking to the same friend, I will pray to govern my words."

You cannot dig the well too deep; but remember to take with you the pipe which supplies fresh air.

Bear in mind the patience of God, and be patient with yourself. You will not find more faults than He knows; nor will you find any which He does not purpose to root out in time. It is *His* work, in which He allows you a share: not *your* work, in which you ask for help. "This is the will of God, even our sanctification."

THE FUNCTION OF THIS LIFE

It is part of the discipline of life, that nothing continueth in one stay. I cannot help the thought that in this world we are not so much working, as learning how to work, and not so much learning how to work, as learning how *not* to work—what faults have to be avoided, what failures to be endured. The Gospel, indeed, is life and hope; but this world and our work in it is not the Gospel, but the refractory material which the Gospel has to subdue.

SERVICE IN THE LIFE TO COME

How much reason I have for sharing your feeling that time is passing and work undone. I comfort myself with the belief, that this is not the world in which work can be properly done. It is school, in which we are being trained in the use of our faculties,

and the employment of them awaits another world. Then, if we have been faithful to our training, we shall have the honour of really successful work for others. We are being taught now how to save the world hereafter. Your little girls will learn little more in the Lower School but to be docile: when they get into the upper classes they will master mathematics, and after that they will perhaps go out to teach others.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Will you be shocked, if I say that I am much more in doubt about women's suffrage than I was twenty years ago? I have always thought it just, and I think so still, but my sense of the value of a parliamentary vote has gone down, and I do not like the thought of women condescending to the huckstering of party politics. Nor does recent action convince me that the wisest women wish generally for the suffrage. So although I hold to my old opinion as a matter of theory, I am not keen for carrying it out.

SOCIETY AND MARRIAGE

It is not well to shut one's self up too much in one's family. Man was made to scatter, leaving his father and mother. Of course I do not mean that you ought to leave home, where you have a clear duty towards your parents; but the more you see of outside people in reason, the better. Don't make up your mind not to marry. It is the natural fulfilment of life; and though in the present disorganised state of society it is too often impossible, it is a great evil that so many young people are debarred from it. Nothing would

give me more pleasure than to hear that you were going to be married. Of course, if it does not come in your way, you can be very useful and happy unmarried; and there are things which nobody but an unmarried woman can do. But I think the unmarried women who are most useful are those who would have married if they could, and not those who have made up their minds that they will not marry. Going into society enlarges one's sympathy; and whether as a wife or as an unmarried daughter and friend or as a missionary, the more you exercise the power of sympathy, the more useful you will be.

I think X. is also right in advising you to go to lectures on history rather than theology. It is not, of course, so high a study, but perhaps it is more widening; and the tendency of lectures on theology is to make too much of minor details, like the criticism of the Gospels, and too little of the great fields of faith and vision.

OVERWORK

To work beyond one's strength, when one is aware of the limits, seems to me a wilful disregard of God's purpose. He has given us a certain amount of working power, and no more; and to exceed it is really to say that He ought to have made us giants instead of weak human beings. Remember that you have no right to cause those who care for you, anxiety for the sake of the parish or a society. Some day we shall have to drop all our work; and it is well to learn to sit loosely to it.

THE TRUE DISCONTENT WITH SELF

What you say about feeling as if all higher things were outside one, is quite natural, and, in a way, quite true. There is a sort of duality in our lives—what St. Paul describes in Romans vii. It is the same in lesser matters. You have high conceptions of art, learned from studying great masters; but when you sit down pencil in hand, your achievement is very different. You know what is right art, but you cannot do it; it lies outside you, and seems unreal and inaccessible. A wise teacher would tell you that this discontent is the only way of hope and progress. If you were satisfied with yourself, you would have no future. But he would say that you must keep this discontent alive by studying those, who have attained to what lies beyond your attainment.

It is so with the service of God. We aspire, fail, are tempted not to aspire again. Study those who have attained: saints who have really found God and done His will. Especially study our Lord's life, who alone perfectly attained. Take just the points in which you fail, and contrast with your failure His success. Self-examination is often morbid and depressing, if it is not combined with detailed examination of Christ.

And here comes in a difference. You study Watts, but have no reason to be sure that you can ever reach his eminence. But when we study Christ we have reason to hope to be like Him; because the very purpose of His coming in the flesh was to enable us, by the Spirit, to be like Him. We have a right to say, "I will be patient, gentle, wise, like Christ";

because He came to make us like Him, and gives us the Holy Spirit to enable us to be so.

I know many people who find it useful to select every day part of their necessary duty—for instance, the writing of a letter, or the paying of a call—and aim at performing it as closely as may be in the spirit of Christ. It is best to select, not some act voluntarily chosen, but something which God appoints for us to do. Think over it carefully: think, for instance, how Christ would behave in the house where you are going to call: how sympathetic He would be, how truthful, how invigorating. Pray repeatedly, and on the way to the house, that “as He was, so you may be in this” house. Break up your conversation with little silent momentary acts of recollection. No doubt, when you review your conversation, you will be more struck by the dissimilarity than by the similarity. It would be so, if you set yourself to copy Watts: you would see the unlikeness of your copy more than the likeness. But you will have been taking the right course for amendment. If you copied Frith, you would learn nothing nor would you, if you were satisfied with doing just what you know you can do. It is not in doing facile trivialities, but in aiming at perfection, that one nourishes a stimulating self-discontent.

There is a spurious discontent which says, “I can never attain:” but there is a genuine discontent which says, “I am far from attaining; but I will reach forward.”

It is not feelings but progress in act, which makes life really valuable. I doubt whether those people are to be envied who find religious emotions easy, who delight in prayer, etc. Of course, ultimately the feelings will go in company with the acts; for

it is impossible to think of a saint in heaven doing God's will, yet feeling depressed. But for us imperfect creatures, it is a special danger when feelings outrun conduct. Some people take comfort in feeling religious, and forget that they are not really religious, *i.e.* practically serving God. Better to go on the way drily, enjoying nothing, but constantly winning some victory over the recalcitrant will.

I should not be surprised if you found some among the poor girls at X., who have a religious temperament—loving chapel, weeping over the Passion, etc., but not curbing their temper or practising other little self-restraints. It would say more for their progress, if they rose punctually, or did disagreeable work. I am going to preach about Jacob this afternoon: religious, valuing the blessing, seeing visions, yet cheating. He needs to be converted by seeing that earth is God's footstool. "This"—the daily life and duty—"is the gate of heaven."

JOY OUT OF SORROW

Sorrows are all around us; but our faith is in One who is acquainted with grief, and does not merely promise to deliver us from it, but takes it up as the very material out of which joy is to be made. He does not say, "Ye shall pass from sorrow into joy," but, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy," just as the filth which we cast in the field, is turned into flowers and fruits. God gives faith and patience to wait for this divine alchemy.

PRUDENCE IN FRIENDSHIP

I am afraid I cannot help you much about your friend, whom I will call X. I have often thought there was a caution in what is said of our Lord, St. John ii. 24. A certain restraint seems to be consistent with perfect love; it is based upon the truth that in every man as he is now, there is an element of unevenness—there is that which is more, and that which is less, trustworthy. An over-confident optimism is not, I think, charity, but rather a closing of the eyes to actual things; and it often leads to a strain upon charity, when we find that the person whom we trusted was not worthy of our trust. That the fault was on the right side, does not make it not a fault. So I suppose some degree of reserve in friendship is a result of prudence. It need not mean that we think A. less trustworthy than ourselves, but that we confess that we and A. are faulty creatures. It would be pleasant, if we could trust ourselves entirely to him; but there is no one deserving of such utter trust but God. Perhaps, then, the lesson for the future is to use more self-restraint in forming friendships: not to love them less, but to trust them less. And this is good for A. himself; because undue trust is apt to encourage him in any vein of self-esteem there may be, and to lead him to selfish demands upon our confidence and service. We lead him astray, unless we help him to realise that he and we have a common Master, whom in our service we are bound to seek. I have known wives made selfish by the unrestrained tenderness of their husbands, who shrink from the pain of pointing out faults, and indulge where they ought

to curb. As regards X., I should think this is the case, and you will do her most good by putting some limit upon your friendship, not humouring it, for instance, when it comes into conflict with other duties. But I don't think her annoyance ought to make you change your decision, when you have made it. It is one of the many cases in which we need the particular inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and in which we should indeed be blind, if we had not the promise and gift of Pentecost.

DEALING WITH ONE IN DOUBT

You may remember that you told me about a friend, who was unsettled about religion by having been brought up among people who wearied her with texts. I think the best way of helping such people is not to talk directly about such subjects, until she begins; but to let her see, as far as one can, the influence of the faith on one's life. Discussion would probably tire her, for she is like a sick person who has lost appetite for food. Of course, one would not disguise the religious motive for one's acts; but on the other hand, one would not obtrude it, but rather let the "light of one's conduct shine before" her. In time one would hope the gradual sense of the need of God will lead her to seek. We must remember how many ages God was content to wait, until He sent his Son to redeem the world from its bondage of unbelief. We are often like the disciples, who wished to call down fire from heaven to convince the unbelievers. There is a fine saying of St. Augustine's that God is patient, because He is eternal. You will remember Goethe's words about God's work in nature—"Ohne Rast, ohne Hast." I should be glad to know how your friend is getting on.

I am afraid your life is very full of anxieties ; and it is a difficult lesson, and one which can only be learned by long practice, to cast one's cares upon God. It is so much easier to do than to wait, especially when there seems to be little prospect of success in this world. But then we are the children of the resurrection, and look for another world, in which the failures of this world will be rectified, and the apparent weakness of God and His cause will be swallowed up in strength.

"Dwell in the land " in which He has placed you, the land of promise, "and verily thou shalt be fed." Our Lord both knows your trials, and knows by experience how such trials can be borne. There is no nobler martyrdom, *i.e.* bearing witness to Christ, than the patient enduring of sorrows like His in the spirit which He displayed, and which He gives to those who ask Him.

ADVICE TO ONE TROUBLED WITH DOUBT

Let me, in a tentative way, suggest the line which it seems to me wise to pursue.

Resist the temptation to think too much of your want of faith. There is often more latent faith than one can discover. I found it a help at one time to assume that I had really lost all faith in God, and then to see how much of my convictions on other matters would have to be modified ; and in this way I found out how much latent faith there still was. It was a hard task, and I do not recommend it.

Avoid, at least for a time, the reading of non-Christian literature. There is much that is good in it, but I don't think you are in a position now to get the good out of it without the evil. Solid meat is good,

but not for dyspeptics. In the same way, I would urge you to avoid, as far as courtesy allows, intimate friendships with unbelievers. On the other hand, associate with those whom you believe to be really acting from Christian motives. I should not recommend the study of what are called Christian evidences ; but you might be helped by such books as F. D. Maurice's "Life," or his "Theological Essays," or Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection."

I should urge you not to discontinue Communion, etc. Such things are safeguards to a wavering faith. I have said a good deal about this in my new book, "The Church of the Living God," p. 93, if you care to get the book from Mudie. In the same way, I should advise you to undertake some definite work of charity, such as you can do without strain on conscience : perhaps not Sunday-school teaching, or district visiting, but such a thing as regularly reading or playing to a blind lady, or helping a recreation class. The temptation of all serious thought is that it turns one's eyes too much towards one's self.

Continue to pray at regular times, and with care, even though there may seem little life in your prayers. And read the Gospels attentively and regularly.

When a dyspeptic patient goes to a doctor, he usually recommends abstinence from indigestible food, and the use of simple food at regular times. Even this sometimes increases the misery for a time, but if the patient gives up food because it hurts him, his derangement gets worse, and he starves.

There is no hypocrisy in persisting in the customs of religion, when there is little apparent faith. You don't go to Holy Communion, etc., to make people think you good, but in the hope that you may find God whom you desire to believe in.

And do not be discouraged by intellectual difficulties. I have said something about these in the same book, p. 132.

Lastly, be patient. Don't expect the sky to clear up suddenly. Difficulty is discipline: it strengthens the character.

GLORY AMID SHADOWS

Do you not think that it is a special beauty of the Faith that its brighter things do not exclude or ignore shadows, but take them up into the harmony of a perfected picture? We do not ignore pain, but rather exalt it over the Altar, because pain itself is made the means of real blessedness in self-surrender. Again, we do not ignore death, or think to escape it, or fancy there is something in us which death does not touch—this I suppose is the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul—but it assures us that, though the whole man die, the whole man is raised again. And to-day (Ascension Day) does not merely speak of a heavenly life, but shows that earthly humiliation is the ground out of which, for us, that life springs; not merely glory, but ascending to glory. So that the Gospel accepts both pessimism and optimism, which is the great need of philosophy.

BEARING A DISAPPOINTMENT

I am sorry you have had to go far from home, but I think you were right. It is easier to begin afresh in a new atmosphere; and at home there might have been things to pain and upset you. And I feel sure you were right in your more painful and difficult

resolution. A long attachment has much to make it painful; but at least it makes it less likely that people will marry without real love. And to go on caring for a person whose love was cold, would have been miserable to both of you. I have no doubt the world seems very dull and grey to you at present; but God's mercy lets green things grow over the scarred rock, and I have no doubt you will in time find new interests filling up your life. After all, nothing can be intolerable which God gives us to bear.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

Through all distresses we must hold fast to the certainty, that God does not fail His children. This assurance is based, not upon any thoughts or words, but upon the fact, that although He allowed His beloved Son to suffer, He never abandoned Him, but made His suffering the means by which He placed His spirit in the Father's hands, in which alone is strength. It will be one of the joys of the new life to discover how the things that seemed to crush us, were really the things which gave us omnipotence, because they placed us stripped of all things in the hands of God. So, while I pray that your health may be restored, and that you may be able to resume work, I pray more assuredly that you may have grace to accept your affliction in such a spirit, as will make you fit to receive strength.

ADVICE ABOUT LENT

And, first, as to operas, etc., in Lent. I think one may very well make a strict rule for one's self, when

the decision is in one's own hands, and no one is affected by it; and equally well, modify the rule another year, when one's actions are to some extent governed by other people. Of course, this does not apply to matters actually wrong. It would not be right, *e.g.*, to go to a vicious play, because your employer desired it; then, at whatever cost to yourself, you would be right to refuse. But this is not the case with such works as serious operas, especially Wagner's. If indeed you were staying in Berlin for your own pleasure, then it would be a good resolution not to give yourself the treat of "Die Walküre" during Lent. But, as things are, you are in Berlin to train the character and mind of a young girl. If you can succeed in persuading her to such an act of self-denial, you will do her a great service. But if she longs to go, and resents not going, I think you might prejudice her against religion by urging on her a self-denial to which she submits reluctantly. Young people often take a careless turn from being called upon to exercise self-denial beyond their consent. So, if Mrs. X. desires an occasional opera for her child's education, or if the girl herself is much set upon going, and cannot be led to see the reason against going in Lent, I think you would be right to go. At the same time it might be possible to persuade the girl to some amount of self-denial: *e.g.* to go to "Die Walküre," but not to "Patience," as more unfit for such a season. And perhaps it might be possible to persuade her on the positive side, which is more profitable, to read, *e.g.*, a stiff and unattractive German book during Lent.

You yourself will, no doubt, enjoy the music; but you will not have gone to it for the sake of enjoyment, but for the sake of doing your duty, and not urging your pupil beyond her present spiritual capacity. I

hardly see the difference between opera and theatre. It would seem to me right under such circumstances to go to "Hamlet" while avoiding "Charley's Aunt" at that season. Though you will have little opportunity of going to Church, your Lent will be well spent, if you make a steady practice of reading and meditation, using for prayer the time which, under other circumstances, you would spend in Church. God is not restricted to any one way of giving grace; and we do well to see, as far as possible, what is the peculiar way in which God intends to bless you this year. If He had placed you this Lent in London, it would probably have been that you should profit by the many Church Services. As He has placed you in Berlin, He probably wishes to develop in you those good things which can be practised in your room. It is the old principle of S. Paul: "He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, and giveth God thanks: he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks." Think of the many people who have become real saints with very few of the blessings of Church Services.

As for the "Walküre" on a Friday, I should wait awhile to see if it is given on another day, but, failing that, I should go some Friday, rather than let your pupil have a rankling thought that your strictness made her lose the chance of seeing it. It might be well to take the opportunity of discussing with her the whole topic of the Ring: the fate which the gratification of Desire brings upon men, giants, even gods—*i.e.* "the corruption which is in the world through lust." As Tannhäuser shows the desire of the flesh, and Lohengrin the desire of the intellect, so the Ring groups together all desire under the symbol of gold. In Parsifal we see how he, who resists desire and

becomes a "pure fool," is the saviour of the ruined. The meaning is all brought out in the last few bars of *Götterdämmerung*, taken together with the stage-direction.

LENT WITHOUT CHURCH PRIVILEGES

I don't think it is a bad thing to have to spend Lent sometimes without going to Church often, if it is not our own fault, but what God lays upon us by sickness or necessary duties. There is such a thing as being selfish even in religious things; and whatever God ordains is always the best discipline for us. Moreover, when we are unable to go to church, we are driven to make more use of private prayer and Bible reading, which are sometimes rather overlooked, when we are well and able to go to Church.

I quite agree with what you say about compelling people to go to Confession. We are bound to teach people about it, and to give them every opportunity of coming, and in some cases we are right to urge them to come; but I don't think we have any right to refuse Confirmation, etc., to those who do not come. Nor do I think it would be good to insist; for people would come unwillingly, and might often be untruthful. It is not God's way to force good things upon us, but to offer them to us, in the hope that we shall have love enough to accept what His Love provides.

DEALING WITH TRYING PEOPLE

God has put us into a world full of unreasonable persons to teach us necessary lessons. The first, perhaps, is patience with such persons. Think of our

Lord's close association with such people : " How long shall I be with you and suffer you ? " How chilling to Him must have been the stupidity of disciples who would not understand Him ! " Are even ye so without understanding ? " He asks. What pain it must have caused Him, when two of His closest friends bargained for a place of honour in His kingdom ; when another was so obstinately self-satisfied and self-confident : " Though all may deny Thee, yet will not I," though within twelve hours Peter did what he said he would never do ! Whatever the pain of dealing with Pharisees and Scribes, I do not think it could be as great as that of dealing with such disciples. But He who " knew what was in man," was not surprised to find them selfish, stupid, capricious ; because it was such people, and not the " whole " in character or intellect, whom He came to save.

I can speak from experience, when I say that this thought is helpful when one has to deal with stupid and unsympathetic people, if we remember that God has brought us into contact with them, that we may in some cases teach them useful lessons, and in all cases we may ourselves learn that most useful lesson of patience.

And then I have found that one may learn the even more useful lesson of humility by seeing in the conduct of others towards ourselves some reflection of our own conduct towards God. You have found N. stupid and indolent ; but may you not take the adjectives to yourself, when you ask how you have risen to the honourable position of being a " fellow-worker with God " ? N. may be weak, obstinate, untrustworthy ; but you will not think that you have been strong in serving God, docile, and as good as your promise in Baptism and at other times. I think we are very slow to realise

that the love of God lays Him open to real slights and griefs from us ; so if we have slights and griefs to bear, it may help us to realise this truth, and to be more humble and faithful. It is the old story of the motes (dust) and the beams (straws).

Try then to drive out uncharitableness by humility. Charity does not require us to shut our eyes to people's faults, but to regard them in the right way, as things displeasing to God, in the cure of which we may possibly have a share. When angry feelings arise against N., make a serious effort to see what light they throw on yourself ; then kneel and pray humbly for yourself, and in time you will be able to pray for him too.

And don't stay away from Holy Communion because he is ministering. Try to look past him to the present Lord. You are coming to the King's presence ; don't be kept away, because the servant who opens the door is unworthy. Come, unworthy yourself, and try to pray for yourself and him. You may not always succeed, and sometimes the bitter thoughts will rise specially at such times. This must not daunt you, if you really wish to be humble and to forgive. The Blessed Sacrament is the continual display of our Lord's condescension : He, for whom angels are not fit companions, comes to enter into us sinners. He comes to wash our feet : let us wash one another's feet. Fighting against this temptation will perhaps teach you a lesson of humility, which nothing else could teach. And nothing in us is solid, unless it is truth on a firm basis of humility.

CURE OF JEALOUSY

Though one must make every effort to check the sin of jealousy in itself, as by forcing one's self to pray for the person of whom one is jealous (I will call her X.), by praying for her and her work, etc., yet I doubt whether real success is to be found along this road. There is usually so much truth mixed up in the matter ; there are real injustices, unkindnesses, insincerities, which one cannot rightly overlook. Jealousy is like a corn on the foot ; it is a disease, but it runs its fibre so into the living flesh, that it is difficult to cut it out without wounding what is both sensitive and healthy.

So I should place more reliance on such a habit of mind as would starve out jealousy. Such, for instance, as a watchful habit of regarding the work in which you and X. are engaged, as a work for God's glory. Thank God with all your heart that ten new pupils (say) are entrusted to you to be brought up as God's children, pray for them each one, think of the honour of nursing them for God, think of the difficulty of doing it worthily, pray more for yourself as an unworthy minister ; and with the thought of God and His glory thus impressed on your mind, you will be more disposed to pray for the twenty new pupils entrusted to X., and to pray for them and her. Suppose you had left your present work, and heard of the splendid success of Miss X. (unknown to you)—the solid growth of the school, the excellent results in the pupils, etc., etc., how rejoiced you would be to hear of it, just as I rejoice to hear of the successful work of some priest at Kilburn now that I am not there, though I might have been jealous of him, had I still been there. That shows that the jealousy springs up, when we forget more or

less that the work is God's, and that He gives us power for it.

In a word, though I would urge you to check the jealousy when it arises, as we cut the corn when it hurts, yet I should expect more success from trying persistently to regard X.'s work and yours as God's work, and yourself and her as God's poor ministers. This will starve out jealousy by starving selfishness : not at once, of course ; it may need long and patient endeavour.]

DEALING WITH TEMPTATION

I do not think we can be surprised if God allows our sins to get to some extent the better of us, until we have learned entire despair of self—that “in me, that is in my flesh (or natural powers), dwelleth no good thing.” For we are apt to think, and the current tendency encourages the thought, that a good deal that is good dwells in us, though it may need God's grace to perfect it. In other words, we are disposed to think of God as the decorator rather than the builder of the house—as the Maker rather than the Creator.

This self-despair by no means forgets the work that God has done in us. “By the grace of God I am what I am,” says St. Paul. It would be ungrateful to forget that God has done great things for us already, whereof we ought to rejoice. Even the quickened sense of right and wrong, by reason of which we judge ourselves, and are distressed by our own fault, is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

When we have learned in some degree this self-despair, two ways open before us—a right and a wrong.

The wrong way leads to hopelessness. "I have failed, therefore I shall always fail." In earthly things even this is dangerous. If the child learning French says, "I am always making blunders; I shall never really learn; I had better give up trying," you would urge her to persevere. Failures must come for a time even to the best students; do they not come from her laziness, or inattention, or conceit? "Persevere," you would say, "and in time you will succeed."

Much more in spiritual things. We have no promise that we shall speak French; we have the promise that we shall be good.

Turn then to the other road from self-despair. It is the way of faith and hope. God will not desert you, though He may very probably try you. Turn your eyes from self which has failed, and fix them on God who alone gives success.

Part failure is no argument against hope. Candour will show you that in many cases failure has come from fault in yourself—for instance, from a lack of prayer or a lack of humility; not from a lack of grace. And what we can perceive in many cases, it is reasonable to believe in others.

It is clear, then, that the only way for us has two elements—utter distrust of self and utter confidence in God. Examine yourself whether you are walking in this way. Do you not, in spite of frequent falls, walk unwarily, as if you were not in danger? Do you not set too high a value on yourself, your opinions, your judgment? Do you not allow yourself in resentment against the things, which humble and disappoint you?

And on the other hand, do you seek with all your heart to believe that Christ Jesus came into the

world to save sinners—that therefore He desires to save you, and arrange all things for your salvation, even those trials which do indeed lead into sin, but which He intends as opportunities of victory, or at least as occasions of bringing the sin to the surface, so that you may recognise it and fight against it?

It is usually too late to make much fight against ill temper, when the occasion arises. The main part of the resistance must be before and after the occasion. *Before* : in trying habitually to live in God's presence, to take what He sends as needful discipline, to distrust your own judgment, to pray specially for those persons and things which specially try you. *After* : in taking blame for falls upon yourself, not throwing them upon God, as if He had refused to help you, tracing up the sin to its roots in carelessness and heedlessness.

We have no warrant, I think, for expecting God to give us a sudden victory. His grace is sufficient, but it is not overpowering, for He leaves room for the co-operation of our wills. We ought at least to be getting the better of our faults, but even here we cannot always judge fairly; for if we fall more frequently in June than in May, it may be because our health in the latter month exposed us to more temptation, or circumstances were harder. So it is not always safe to conclude that because we fall more in June than in May therefore we are really going back in spiritual things. Memory, too, often plays us false as to times past. All we can safely do is to throw ourselves after each fall upon the loving compassion of our Father, ask for His strength in our weakness, and resolve to fight again in more utter reliance on Him.

Two general practices of the spiritual life are good for all sorts of sins :

(1) Try to bear in mind the way in which our Lord bore similar temptations, *e.g.* if you are vexed with A. because she will not learn, think of His three years with "fools and slow of heart." If you are vexed because your plans are set aside, think of Him who "could not do many mighty works" in one place "because of their unbelief."

(2) Practise habitual thanksgiving—for the sense given you to teach A., for the greater diligence of B., for the consent of C. to your proposals. Remember that blessings are like diamonds—bright, but small: they need looking for.

We talk about mastering ourselves. It is a true phrase; but St. Paul uses one which is still more true, when he speaks of "bringing into captivity every thought *to the obedience of Christ.*"

METHODS OF MEETING TEMPTATION

I think it is very possible that your new temptation is connected with the relief from temptations to ill-temper. Satan adapts his methods of attack to the varied circumstances in which God places us.

Remember, first of all, that temptation is not sin. It is no more sin to have these thoughts suggested to you by Satan than to have them suggested by a human being. Your duty is twofold—to prepare against them, and to repel them when they come.

A. First, as to preparation: this is

1. *General*: habitual watchfulness over thoughts; industry; occupying the mind with good thoughts (religious, scientific, domestic, etc.); especially interspersing your work with dedications to God, prayers for grace, acts of faith in God's presence, etc.

Repeat Psalms, etc. Read interesting and thoughtful books; analyse them.

2. *Special*: daily prayer against such thoughts, especially at times, when they are likely to occur. This prayer ought not to be long, and ought not to dwell upon details, only such as "Lord, who hast given Thy Holy Ghost to enlighten me, keep me by the same Spirit from all evil thoughts."
3. *Bodily*: moderate self-denial, particularly in such matters as easy postures; all bracing habits, such as cold baths, moderate exercise (brisk walking, gymnastics, etc.).

By such discipline you may be able to prevent (by God's grace) the devil from suggesting the thoughts. But if he does suggest them, then

B. way of repelling them:

1. Do not parley with them: as soon as you perceive them, flee.
2. Bodily movement: running upstairs, etc., doing something for another person.
3. Mental movement: working out a sum; trying to repeat a poem, or an irregular verb. Either of these must be accompanied with a short prayer: "Lord, save me."
4. Spiritual remedy (especially if the temptation be very sore): picture the Agony, or the Passion, or the Judgment.

In such extreme cases try bodily pain—a blow, a pinch, etc.

5. When the thoughts are suggested at prayer-time, don't leave off your prayers. Make an act of faith in God's presence; bid Satan depart in Christ's Name; take a more unrestrained attitude. If the temptation

continues, disappoint Satan by praying over it. Make acts of faith in Christ's power to save from all sin ; in the operation of the Holy Ghost, etc.

I hope this course may (by God's blessing) help to deliver you. You will, of course, remember that these things are not charms to make you good without your will, but means (almost sacraments) by which God will help you. If the temptation still remains, bear it meekly and patiently ; it shows what creatures we are, that Satan thinks such thoughts likely to tempt us ; be humble, bear this reproach, fight on, and wait till God gives the victory. Remember that our Lord's victory was only after three temptations, and even then Satan only departed from Him for a season. Don't be disappointed, then, if relief is delayed.

RECOVERY AFTER FALLS

If you are resolved on trying to follow Christ, I do not see that this or any other sin, not willingly consented to, should hinder you from Communion.

The Holy Communion is not the reward for victory but the arming for it. But the enemy must be strenuously resisted by prayer, fasting and humiliation. See how it mars the likeness of Christ in you, how it dishonours Him, how it disturbs your soul.

Ask then what Christ would do in your place, and seek His grace to do the same ; fight, and the Lord prosper you.

Perhaps this sudden temptation will lead you to see how you have been letting your battlements fall into ruin, and so may lead you to repair them. We proudly give up prayer, as if we could stand alone ;

and the storm comes and we fall. Rise up, and be more wary. Take difficulties in the way of return to devotion as a penance. Would it be fair if we could neglect God one year, and the next year find ourselves as much in favour with Him, as if we had always served Him?

The prodigal would be content as a hired servant.

TEMPTATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

I do not think I have ever heard a case more distressing or more perplexing than that which you tell me. It needs a person much more spiritual than myself, and more familiar with hypnotism. I do not feel sure whether it is right to assume hypnotism in the case. Books, so far as I have read them, assert that it is impossible for hypnotic suggestion to make a person do that which is contrary to habitual moral determination, so that, for instance, it would not be possible to make a man steal, if he had habitually trained himself to be honest and to resist temptations to dishonesty. I confess I have doubts on this point, and at all events I imagine it only holds good in the case of a person who has habitually resisted the temptation, not in the case of one who had been honest rather by force of education or circumstances, than by deliberate and conscious self-determination. There is a further question on which I should be glad of light—whether it is possible to establish hypnotic suggestion without preliminary passes or the like. Here I am inclined to think that it is possible, though much more difficult than if the ordinary method is followed.

Leaving these points unanswered, as I am forced by ignorance to do, I am inclined to suppose that Mr.

X., being probably a man of intellectual and volitional power, did establish some degree of hypnotic influence over Miss A., and that her consent was not entirely voluntary. Possibly she had led so innocent a life that her previous purity had been rather a result of good habit and general inclination, not of deliberate decisions that "*I will not give way to this temptation.*" "He, that hath not been tempted," said Jeremy Taylor, "may be innocent, but virtuous he is not, nor hath its reward." There is this advantage in temptation, that it enables us to make virtue more positively our own. I have found among those, who have had no social shield against sin, a more fierce determination to be good than is, usually found among those, who have lived a shielded life. This may or may not be the case in the present case.

Putting aside these questions, and coming to temptation in general, we learn from our Lord's example, that it comes with special violence and frequency to those who are most saintly. He sums up His life as His temptations: "Ye are they who have continued with Me in My temptations." And indeed they come specially at times of peculiar spiritual vigour. It was after His reception of the Spirit that He was "driven by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil." This may be for two reasons: that the tempter is especially provoked to assail; and that God, who has just given peculiar grace, gives also an occasion to utilise it. It does not seem to me strange that Miss A., having just done a splendid act of heroism in trying to protect her sister, may have had unusual temptation. The danger of such moments is that, having done something conspicuously good, we should become self-complacent. I remember a singularly truthful person, who, just after doing something

notably fine, was tempted to tell a deliberate lie, and told it. "I never thought I should do such a mean thing," she said; that is to say, she was satisfied with herself. I would urge Miss A. to consider whether at the time she was inclined to be satisfied with herself, possibly contrasting with her sister's weakness her own strength. Even her very right desire to influence X. for good may have included some degree of self-reliance. She was going into a place of danger: did she go with humility? Of course I do not venture to say that she did not; but I think this is a question she should press upon herself; and not the less, perhaps, because she now casts the blame upon God.

After all, the really important question is, Can the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ put us into a position where we must sin? I do not think we can expect to answer such a question simply from our own experience; partly because our knowledge of ourselves is so defective, that we may easily overlook faults in ourselves which may quite probably have contributed to our fall. Who can say, "I was faultless, but overpowering evil came upon me, and I could not but yield"? When the temptation came, did it not find some weak spot in us—such as presumption—upon which it took hold? Perhaps the temptation—possibly even the fall—was needed to humble us. Remembering my own want of faith, I am certainly not disposed to blame your poor friend for her present distrust of Him and anger against Him; but I think her hope lies in a steady endeavour to believe in God, as our Saviour has revealed Him. "Though He slay me, yet will I put my trust in Him." At all events we may be sure that God is willing to raise us from sin, however we came to fall into it. Your poor friend may hope to

become the more effective Christian, because she has had experience of sin, and will have experience of His power to redeem us. I pray that she may learn to base her faith upon the character and the promise of our Saviour, and not on any personal experience, which we are always too likely to misinterpret. May God lead her through this misery to peace.

I have just been struck by the similarity of St. Peter's history and that of Miss A., as I have conceived it. He was sure he would not desert his Master; he was very brave in entering the palace when others forsook and fled; cowardice was not a natural vice in him, nor, I imagine, was falsehood; yet he was apparently tempted just because of his devotion and courage, and failed repeatedly, while those who were less brave did not fail. He might have asked, "How can God care for me when He lets me be tempted and fall, just because I did not run away?" But, on the contrary, he remembered how our Lord had warned him of the danger of self-sufficiency. Had he watched and prayed? And then there is the comfort that though Peter had sinned more sadly than any of the disciples, save Judas, our Lord brought him to perfect repentance, and reinstated him in his charge of the flock. I hope that Miss A. will have the like restoration, and will then find that she is the more humble and trustful, and the more helpful to others, just because of her sad experience.

BENEFIT OF UNCONGENIAL ENVIRONMENT

I think the necessity of groping one's way in matters where duty is not emphatic, is the exercise which does more than anything else to develop conscience; and I should almost entirely oppose the

advice of which you tell me, to "move heaven and earth to live with Catholics." We were not put in this tangled world to save ourselves or to find a way without use of conscience and thought. I remember J. A. Symonds telling me that a man who in his native Tirolese village is moral and religious, almost always, if he moves to another country, goes to the bad, because at home he has done right only because the atmosphere there was good, and there was no call upon him to choose for himself. Out of that atmosphere he is without root. The great saints of the early Church grew up in a society which was unspeakably vicious, where they had to feel their way. Whatever casts us upon the promised guidance of the Holy Ghost into all truth, develops our character, and makes us what God desires to have us—not merely innocent, but voluntarily good.

I am very glad you asked the Chaplain to receive your confession, not only for your own sake, but also for his. There is certainly no place where a priest learns so much of his duty as in the confessional; and it is quite likely that being called upon to perform this part of his duty may make him think. I believe Dr. Pusey says somewhere, that it was the being required to receive confessions which made him feel the need of it for himself.

It is one of the weak points in the English Church, that men are sent to minister with hardly any study of the Faith. Things are probably better than they were, but there is need of great improvement. Rome is wiser in this respect, though she discourages independent thought in religion. The few of her clergy who venture to think for themselves are now suffering terrible persecution, and many men are driven into hypocrisy. There is no part of the Church which does

not need corporate penitence; and though we are no more faultless than others we have the advantage that there is no hindrance to our owning our faults.

THE SEVERITY OF CHARITY

I cannot think that the command to forgive involves the restoration of trust to a person whom we have found untrustworthy. God has given us powers of observation to be exercised, and if we have reason to think a person untrustworthy, it would be untrue to force oneself to treat him as trustworthy. Our Lord Himself "needed not that any should teach Him of men, for He knew what was in man"—a saying which (if one may use the phrase without irreverence) has a touch of cynical candour about it.

Charity is not a mere sentimental regard; it is often severe, else how could God, who is love, punish? and how could St. Paul commit a sinner to Satan for the destruction of the flesh? It is often the most charitable course to punish, that the offender may learn to amend.

What charity does demand is that severity should spring, not from wounded personal feeling, resentment, dislike, etc., but from a sincere desire to serve God and do one's duty towards others. The weight of your words will, to a great extent, depend upon the calmness with which you speak—not sharp reproaches, but a serious statement of the fault. The keynote is struck by our Lord's denunciation of the Pharisees: "Generation of vipers—bring forth fruits—think not to say," etc. I should try to spend a few quiet moments with the Crucified before speaking.

THE SAME SUBJECT

Refining

I can very well understand your feeling of wishing to run away from such difficulties as those which you are now meeting, for I often feel the same. So long as it is only a wish, and is not yielded to, it is only a temptation to cowardice, which, if overcome, may make courage the more rational and voluntary. Perhaps it was to make his courage more worthy of a reasoning being (not like that of the beasts, who are brave because they are fearless, not because they control fear) that the Holy Spirit commissioned Agabus and other prophets to meet St. Paul on his way to Jerusalem with warnings of persecution (Acts xx. 23 ; xxi. 4, 11).

As I grow older, I become more and more sure that just severity is the truest charity. We think we can be more kind than God, and let evils stand which He gives us power to destroy. The poor girl herself may be roused by her disgrace to think of her sin more seriously. And I suspect there are many young people who do very wrong things without much reflection, who are only to be roused and enlightened by seeing that older people look upon their sin as very serious.

But then you must take care to make justice an exercise of charity by praying very much for the wrong-doers, and by trying to let it be seen that you are punishing, not for your own pleasure, but for the honour of God and for the good of the girls. And try to make this an occasion for aiming at a more constant recollection of God. If you can get the girls to remember that God sees them, you will have done the chief thing to keep them right; and this you will do,

not so much by words, as by living in the midst of them a life of recollection. Remember that the angels help us to be good not by spoken words (for we do not hear them), but by living in our midst the life of those who "in heaven do always behold the Face of the Father who is in heaven." I dare say you can remember, as I can, how much help there has been in the mere society of a very holy person.

If, as I suspect, these sins are against the holiness of the body, I should hardly fancy it would be well to say much directly on the subject; though of course a few kind, serious words of warning to a girl whom you suspect to be in danger might at times be useful—spoken in privacy, so that there may be the less danger of their being turned into a matter of ridicule or gossip or curiosity. But any habits of bodily self-discipline which you can teach the girls without risk to health, would be good; I mean such things as punctual rising, punctuality in lessons, tidiness, avoiding too easy and unrestrained postures, self-denial in luxuries (sweets, books, letter-writing), so as to give more alms, and the like. But, above all, try to love God more, and they will learn of you, and love will cast out sin.

AGAINST CENSORIOUSNESS

Don't allow yourself to be fretted by teaching and behaviour, over which you have no control. If you have Mr. Keble's Letters at hand, you will find one most excellent on the subject. I cannot cast my eye on it, but you would not lose any time if you were to turn over the pages of the book, which is full of tender wisdom. I think he advises to keep the eyes shut as far as possible, to turn the irreverence of others into matters of prayer, and to think how much

more pain we may give our Lord by our uncharitable thoughts than an ignorant person may give Him by outward irreverence. It is sad, for instance, that the priest should endanger the security of the Chalice by holding it carelessly; but how much more sad that we who have received the Sacred Blood, and know we have received it, should allow our hearts to entertain thoughts contrary to that dying Love and Humility! Do you not need much watchfulness and prayer against the spirit of censoriousness? The faults of others of which you speak, are real faults, and are rightly regretted and prayed against; but this one can only do safely, when you are still more quick to detect and blame your own faults, other in kind, no doubt, but perhaps no less grievous. Think what it must have been for our Saviour, who knew well what perfect service was, to worship at a sacrifice offered by Caiaphas; or for Him, who knew and loved the Truth, to listen in the synagogue to the sermons of blind leaders of the blind. It is His will to put His Gospel into earthen vessels; and we must not let the defects of the minister distract us from the excellence of what they minister. People often get into an unsettled state by allowing themselves to dwell upon such defects; and sometimes they are tempted to desert the place where God has put them, because of the faults of others, whereas they would be much more profitably employed in seeing and correcting their own faults. This is often the cause which lead people to secede to Rome or to some strange religion.

THE IMPERFECTION OF THE CHURCH

I daresay you do not know how much pleasure such a letter as yours gives to the writer of a book.

With all his perception of its failings it is, after all, his child, and he likes to hear that it has been useful. And if it has been allowed to bring some light into dark places, I am thankful not for your kindness alone, which tells me so, but for the kindness of God Who has let my words be of service.

I cannot but think that there is more help and comfort to us struggling creatures in the conception of a Church which (like her Head) is compassed with infirmities than in the conception of a Church so shielded against attack, that it can never even seem to fail. She and we alike live by faith and hope in the ultimate disclosure of that which the Incarnation veils and reveals.

Meanwhile I cannot be much distressed by anything which discourages a diplomatic solution of the Church's difficulty. We need devotion more than discussion, and to the devotion of the Church, in penitent faith, we can all contribute, whatever our ignorance.

May I say that if at any time I can be of any service to you, I shall think it a privilege? I am not forgetful how many there are more competent to help, yet sometimes God prefers to use the less competent.

THE ABSENCE OF COMFORT

I think that many people are rather saddened by the contrast between their own defects and the language of devotional books. These books are mostly written by great saints, whose experiences can hardly be made a safe rule for very imperfect people. It is good to use such books, because they keep us from being

satisfied with ourselves ; but they need to be read with caution, lest they make us depressed.

It occurs to me that your trial is perhaps just the thing you need. Many people have to fight all their lives against fierce temptation, or against the sadness inspired by black memories of early life. You, by God's great mercy, have been kept from such sorrows. Yet if you had no struggle, you might sink into apathy. It is possible that a prodigal might be unable to believe in his forgiveness without the sacramental pledges of a ring and robe and feast ; whereas the son who has been always with his father, is required to believe in the father's love without the sign of a kid for a feast —if you had, for instance, St. Augustine's conscious devotion it might be too undisciplined a gift for you ; if he had it not, the memory of terrible sins might overwhelm him.

It seems to me that mortification is needed not only for our sins, but for our good things. Not only Adam must die in us, but also Christ ; for to all of us this world is the school where we may learn to die, and they erred who taught that for any of us the Resurrection was already past. Even our prayers need to be crucified and seem to fail, even Faith, Hope and Love hung, and must still hang, on the Cross. How easy it would be for us to grow self-satisfied, if all that God puts in us bore fruit at once !

For if we had constantly the realisation of God's Presence and Goodness, we might fall into the idolatry of worshipping not God, but our own conception of Him. We might be tempted to pray, etc., not because God bids us, but because we enjoyed prayer. May it not be that a dry prayer perseveringly fulfilled and humbly submitted to, may be more acceptable than a prayer full of rapture ? In the latter case we might

be praying because we enjoyed it; in the former we can hardly be deceived into praying for any reason, but that God bids and that He may be glorified.

Being very imperfect, our prayers share our imperfection. I think the real lesson is to try earnestly to *do* what God requires, more humbly and punctiliously, leaving the feeling to Him. No doubt when we are perfect, the feeling will correspond with the obedience; but what He requires of us is obedience, not feeling. It is often a dangerous error to seek after feelings of devotion, because it turns our eyes away from Him to our own mind.

It seems, then, that the first matter for us to seek into, is any imperfection which forces God to deal so hardly with us. Probably you may find some subtle form of selfishness marring your service, unpunctuality for instance, or want of consideration for others. Of course I don't know whether there is anything of this sort or what it may be; but I think it would be well, in self-examination, to try and see what has hindered good works from being as good as they might have been; and that not in a scrupulous, anxious way, but with a loving desire to serve God perfectly.

But I should not advise you to spend much time or thought in this direction; I should make the chief exercise the loving study of God as revealed in Christ. In Heb. xii. 2 there is a phrase inadequately translated: "Let us run . . . looking *away* unto Jesus"—away, that is, from our own steps. I remember hearing that the first exercise of a walker on the tight-rope is to look straight in front, not at his feet; if he looks there, he stumbles. You might find it useful to keep a note-book for gracious words and acts and promises of the Lord, whenever they come specially home to you. Note, for instance, any special

cases in which He has fulfilled a promise to you ; the miserable prayerless day, for instance, when you are quite sure that He has been interceding for you ; the temptation, not perceived at the time, when He shielded you. Such a note-book would cheer you at depressing times, helping you to look away from self to Him. Try to be very real in praises and thanksgivings, not necessarily feeling much gratitude, but clearly seeing His goodness, and trying to repay Him by some act of service ; *e.g.* "To-day He checked me just as I was going to speak censoriously of X. I praise and thank Thee, Lord ; and for Thy sake I will specially pray for X. to-day." Examine yourself, but examine still more earnestly Him, "that He may be justified in His saying, and clear when He is judged." And pray constantly, "Increase my faith," or, as it really is, "Add faith to me ;" especially when you can pray for nothing else. Faith is the root out of which all righteousness grows. Remember "When I go down into hell, Thou art there also."

I do not at all think you are missing God ; but in any case be sure He will not miss you. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." He wills it much more than we can. And the misery is His remedy. The pain of longing is a sign that He inspires love, though the love be not yet perfect, nor have cast out fear. There is a good chapter on spiritual dryness in the "Spiritual Combat." Do you know Miss Rossetti's poems, especially "I will accept" (p. 224) and "I have not sought Thee" (p. 450, in the old volume) ?

I am afraid I have said little to help you, only if I have said the sacred Name I have said all. Please write again whenever you are disposed, and remember in your prayers a blind leader of the blind.

THE SAME SUBJECT

Do not let yourself be discouraged, because the girls are often no better for the Sacraments. They do not work as charms, but depend for their effect upon the right use of them.

For yourself, try to carry this into effect by choosing before each Communion some one duty which is clearly and necessarily laid upon you, such as keeping your temper with X., and try to perform it in the conscious remembrance of your Communion; *i.e.* when you are tempted to be irritable with X., say in your heart, "This ill temper is unworthy of a disciple of Christ. In His Name, and by His power, I will fight hard against this fault." You will not always succeed, but I believe you will on the whole, and more as the habit of trying grows. Don't choose for the purpose duties which you select for yourself (*e.g.* to spend three hours in prayer), but duties which are clearly put before you by God, who prepares good works for us to walk in. And don't think much about comfort. This is to be our reward, when we have done the work. Some great saints have had little comfort in their religion; and, though I would never put myself among them, I may say that I hardly know what it is to be comforted by religion. But I do, in a very small way, know what it is to be strengthened by it, or rather by the Lord whom it seeks.

NURSING

Nursing is a service rendered to the Holy Spirit, the "Giver of Life." Never mind, if it involves shortened prayers and absence from Church. It is

but substituting one form of service for another, and a form which God provides, for one which is left more or less to our own choice.

THE FUNCTION OF PAIN

It seems to me that our Lord's union with us individually is according to the method of His Incarnation. As at the first, so still, He unites Himself to us while we are yet sinners, and therefore all His earlier work in us is more or less distorted by sin. This is what we mean, when we recognise that our best works spring from mixed motives. This I take to be part of what St. Paul means by "knowing Christ after the flesh," which he seems to affirm of himself, though he had not seen our Lord with the bodily eye. The flesh is our externality; and that which we know after the flesh we know, as it were, apart from ourselves, or imperfectly assimilated. Yet it is Christ in us, Who does the good work, though we fancy it is Christ outside us, Who helps us to do it. These works, then, need death, that the true part may pass over to its true place, leaving the faulty part behind to sink into its actual nothingness. All our pain is part of the slaying breath of the Living Spirit; and it may all be discerned as this, if we look in faith at it. It is perhaps easier to see this with respect to spiritual than with respect to bodily pain. We must be as really partakers of the weakness and death of Christ, as we can be of His glorious Resurrection. In neither case can Christ's life and work be imputed to us; it must be actually imparted to us. I think you might find much light in meditation on Hebrews iv. 12-13: the way into rest by the slaying word. I think the word

should be "knife," not "sword," the sacrificial instrument, and that the imagery is from the cutting up of victims for sacrifice—Lev. i. 6. So "open" means "flayed." The holy victim of the burnt-offering (which is the sort of offering we are called to offer, being at peace with God) yet needs cutting, washing, flaying, slaying.

Do you know Mr. Jukes's book on "The Law of the Offerings"? And do you know dear William Law's "Spirit of Prayer"?

TO ONE SUFFERING FROM A NERVOUS BREAK-DOWN

One sees things most truly, when one looks at them in their highest development; and in considering how devotion may be free from excitement, we have the blessing of our Lord's example to help us.

His natural place, so to speak, is in the bosom of the Father. There He is, even when He comes to declare the unknown Father to us. In the course of that declaring He comes into the turmoil of creaturely life, and even His spirit is "troubled" (St. John xi. 33, 38). Out of that agitation, I presume, His one way of escape was to turn to the Father's bosom, and rest in the conviction of His Love, and in acquiescence in His Will.

For ourselves I suppose there are three possible states. First there is the spurious peace, which they have who ignore God; though His merciful judgment will not let them have it always. Then there is the agitated border-land between Hell and God, in which we are carried hither and thither, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit lusting against the

flesh. And beyond it lies the third state, the "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

Now I am quite sure that for most of us, at most times in this world, the middle state is the right state. It is in such agitation and strife that character mainly grows. And to meet our needs in this transitional state God reveals Himself in such an effective way as may counterbalance the attractions of sense—*i.e.* by hopes and fears, by rebukes which cause shame, by even taking upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. All these things, which appeal to our affections, are necessary for most of us, and for a time.

But "the flesh" belongs to our Lord chiefly as the "Way." "He hath made through the flesh a new and living way." Beyond it lie the Truth and the Life.

My impression is that God's providence calls you especially to dwell in Christ as the Truth; *i.e.* restfully to dwell upon Him as manifesting that Truth of God, which underlies all the phenomenal diversities, which demand our affections and develop our character. To put my meaning more clearly, I think you would do well not to dwell (at least for the present, till your health is quite restored) so much on such thoughts as Sin, the Passion, the Crucifixion, as on those truths which underlie these—the perfect will of God, His love which no sin can shake, His continual blessed Presence, and His assured victory.

If I am right in suggesting this course, I should not be dismayed, if there should result a certain apparent dulness and quiescence. The thoughts I propose move one, not from without but from within, and therefore are less perceptible. Moreover, I should suppose that a certain degree of insensibility (as it

seems) belongs properly to a weak state of mind. Just as the exhausted body hates exertion, and the hatred points less to the disorder than to the proper way of overcoming it, so I should think that this dulness may be a sort of Rest Cure for an overstrained mind. You can't rouse yourself to feel, because feeling is just what you cannot bear now. But feeling (as you know well) is not religion, though it may often contribute to it. The resolution, "I will not fret to-day, if I do not get a letter from X., because I know that X. and I are alike in the hands of the most merciful God," might, I think, stand as a type of the resolutions you should make now.

I should, if I were you, make self-examination very short, confession very simple, prayer rather in fragments than in continuity. I should take pleasant quiet thoughts about God as companions for the day; perhaps selecting from Holy Scripture each morning some short passage of trust—such as one of the phrases of Ps. xxiii., writing it out to impress it on the memory, and recurring to it frequently, though not at stated times. Take the spiritual abstinence from activity, which the great Physician seems to prescribe, as His prescription; and be no more afraid of it leading to spiritual indolence than you would let the fear of bodily indolence hinder you from obeying an earthly physician's prescription not to rise before noon, or not to walk more than half a mile. I do not mean that in either case there is no danger of indolence; but the fear of it ought not to make one suspicious of the Rest Cure. As your mind regains strength, you will instinctively resume old habits.

No doubt your difficulty is greatly increased by the sad news¹ which you tell me, and in which I

¹ A brother had put an end to his own life.

would offer you my heartiest sympathy. I cannot wonder that one who had not attained to hope in God, should fall into despair, knowing, as I do, how close at hand it is even to one who believes. Your brother is in the hands of infinite Love. Very likely it was impossible for him to attain to faith here, and removal to another sphere may well be the beginning of a new life; just as a boy who has got into bad ways in one school, is best helped by being removed to another. Be sure that no soul is out of reach of Him, Whose mercy is over all His works. Of course I shall pray for him.

I am afraid this letter is both obscure and unprofitable; but at least it will show how glad I was to hear from you, and how thankful I should be, if in any way I could serve you. May our Lord be to you a Rock in the midst of the flood.

TO THE SAME

I do not think that those who think that there are some who fall utterly from grace, need abstain from prayer for all the departed. For we are judges of no man, and can never say that God's mercy may not see extenuations, where we see none. And it is possible that a work of grace may have begun, where our dull eyes could see no signs of it. Whatever good there was in the man who died (and our love for him seldom fails to discover some good, and more perfect love could discover more) was the work of the Holy Ghost, Who is the only giver of Goodness. So, I suppose, the woman who mourned for Nero saw some traces in him of the good disposition, which the awful trial of arbitrary power had stifled, so far as most people could discern; and, had she been a Christian,

she might have prayed, "This grace Thou didst give: despise not the work of Thine own hands." And, I suppose, no one will think that any one has forfeited the Love of God. It may conceivably be possible to place an everlasting barrier in the way of that Love's perfect work; and God may possibly mourn ineffectually, as often earthly parents do, over a son who has taken up his abode among swine in a far country; but surely he cannot cease to love His obstinate son. I think Dr. Pusey says well that hell is that which Divine Love prepares for those, for whom no other state would be so fit. When, then, we pray for such a son of God, we do not wish to dictate to God the way in which His love is to show itself; but, being sure that that love is infinite, we ask that it may have such operation as is possible with regard to one whom, if we love him, God loves much more.

But, for my own part, I see promises in Holy Scripture which encourage me to hope that the love of God will have with all men a glorious issue. I read of all men being made alive in Christ, of all things being put under His feet (and this, I believe, can only be the reconciliation of all wills to Him, for He could never hold it a real victory, if His enemies were subdued indeed to impotence, but still retained their inward antagonism to Him). I read of sin abounding, but grace much more abounding; of One who is able to save to the uttermost, and is the same (*i.e.* the Saviour) for ever as to-day. I would not underestimate the terrible words of Holy Scriptures, especially from the lips of Incarnate Love, of the ruin caused by sin; and very likely it is not possible for us, with our limited understanding, to reconcile passages which speak in this tone with others which speak of the final restoration of all; but such

difficulties of reconciliation are already present, when we think of words which speak of man's free will with others which speak of the dominion of grace. In each case, our duty is not to set aside one group of passages in favour of the other, but to hold them both as indications of a mystery which we cannot yet reconcile. It has been the custom of the Church to name in her public prayers those only who are in the Communion of saints; but she has never interpreted this custom in a strict way, and has never limited the private prayers of Christian people. And, if you have ever chanced to see a little book which dear Alfred Gurney and I wrote on the "Catholic Inheritance in the Larger Hope," you will have seen how wonderfully the Church has been guided to avoid any direct statement of the possibility of unending sin and rejection. But I don't want to worry you with controversy; only to encourage you to hope and pray for those, who seem to us to have died in sin.

DEPRESSION AND ITS CURE

I can sympathise with what you say about depression, for it is the fault to which I am specially prone; but one must try to remember that it is a fault, and that we have to fight against it as resolutely as another person may have to fight against anger or drink. As usual, the battle has to be fought in two ways. First, one must take habitual pains against it, by praying that God may be glorified in us, by casting our cares upon Him, by remembering that we were not sent into this world to seek our own happiness but the glory of God, and by sedulously giving

thanks for every blessing we recognise, bearing in mind that there are thousands of blessings which we do not recognise, and among them many things that at the time seem rather burdens. Then comes the more special exercise of rousing ourselves when we feel the fit of depression coming on by acts of faith in the Fatherly care of God, and by repeated acts of self-dedication to His glory. One great difficulty which I find in fighting against depression, is that it takes hold of what we cannot in reason refuse to confess to be real difficulties and burdens. They are not fanciful cares, though too often we let fanciful cares worry us as much as those which are real. And then, there is often the anxious duty of deciding what practical step we ought to take. If we were left to face the difficulty of life without the aid of God, I think the burden would be too heavy for us to bear; and I have no sympathy with the silly optimism, which shuts its eyes to the real sadness of life. This is far from being the "best of all possible worlds." On the contrary, it is a "world which lieth in the evil one," as St. John says; but it is a world which the Incarnate Son has redeemed, and which we are to bring into its new and hardly experienced obedience to Him; and the first step towards this is ourselves to learn obedience by the things which we suffer. The saint who has learned really to pray, "Thy will, not mine, be done," is not likely to be over-burdened by the difficulty, which is also the glory, of his course. A long and hard task, but therefore one which we must take up in serious earnest. May God enable you to do so.

CONFESSION

I am always glad, when I can not only say *what* I think is right, but also *why* I think so, because in that way there is the less risk of over-riding the conscience.

I suppose that the Sacrament of Penance grew up around the fact, too soon realised in the Church, that a Christian could cut himself off by wilful sin from the Blood, or Life, of Christ. Had the Church, to whom our Lord had given authority to forgive, power to do anything for such a man? The answer came from the recognition that even deadly sin is not absolutely mortal: the sinner is still capable of sorrow for his sin, and this he would not be, if he were absolutely cut off from the Life of Christ. If we are really separated from Him, we should have no power to judge ourselves. So mortal sin is not that which has extinguished, but that which approximates to extinguishing, the Divine life in us. The early Church, then, looked at the wilful sinner as still a brother, though for his own sake she cut him off from the means of grace; and when the severed brother was brought by the way of shame and pain to repentance, she restored him to his place in that living Body of Christ from which he had been separated. I think I used somewhere the illustration of a limb bitten by a snake; the surgeon puts a ligature above the wound, lest the poison should get into the circulation; then he lances and cauterises the injured limb to let the poison out; finally, he removes the ligature to allow the pure living blood, which runs through the whole body, to reach the injured part and repair its tissue.

Open excommunication implied open absolution; but there must have been in all ages cases, in which a

grave sin escaped open punishment. A. blasphemed Christ, was detected, excommunicated, lived a while under censure, then, on repentance, was solemnly absolved by the Bishop. Now B. committed precisely the same sin, but was not detected, save by his own conscience; yet he felt that his sin had as surely cut him off from the Living Body, as if it had been detected. Conscience, then, led him to confess his sin, and to take his place by the side of A. There was then no law to compel him to do so beyond the compulsion of conscience. It was not until a later age, that people in the condition of B. were told that they *must* confess their grave sins; nor again until later, that a yearly confession of mortal sins was required of all Christians. We may think it was not very charitable to assume that everybody had probably committed a deadly sin during the year; but we ought to remember that the imposition of yearly confession was made with every charitable purpose, lest a sinner should ignore his peril.

Then a third sort of case required notice. C. had never blasphemed Christ, but his conscience (being tender) assured him that he had been guilty of a sin of the same nature (though not of the same degree) as that of the apostate; he had, more or less, forgotten God, and, so far, had fallen away from the living Body of Christ. He asked whether the Sacrament of Penance was not desirable for him also; and in course of time he was allowed (not required) to seek Absolution. (I imagine that in the earliest ages a person who had no more than such lesser sins on his conscience, would not have been admitted to Absolution, because he had by no means cut himself off from the Living Body; though he might well confess his sins to the priest for the purpose of seeking advice and Christian

sympathy. This, I think, we find in Origen's advice to consult a priest as one does a physician.) One might perhaps say that a person guilty only of venial sins *may* be absolved, because sin of every degree is in the direction of severance from the Body of Christ, but he does not so *need* Absolution as the person does whose sin has almost entirely cut him off; prayer, Communion, fellowship in good works, are sufficient to restore him to the Christian fellowship in the Divine Life. (If you chance to have the book, you would find excellent passages on this subject in Bishop Churton's "Use of Penitence." He suggests in the case of only venial sins the use of a precatory form of Absolution, such as that in the Holy Communion; not that such a form conveys a lesser gift than the declaratory form, but because the difference of form points to the different need.)

Now perhaps we have reached a point at which I can answer your questions. I may assume that the sins you have on your conscience are venial; *i.e.* that they spring not from wilful and determined resistance to the Will of God, but from spiritual debility. If God gave you the opportunity, you would be quite right to strengthen your spiritual life by (among other things) seeking Absolution, which is restoration to the full flow of the Life of Christ; but I cannot think that this, which is permissible, is requisite. Examine yourself, and ask whether these faults do not come from forgetfulness or neglect of a grace which you possessed—whether more diligent use of prayer and Bible-reading and Holy Communion would not enable you to overcome them; resolve to fight against them in the assurance that you are a member of Christ, and therefore a partaker of His Life-blood, which "cleanseth from all sin." "Because I am a Christian I need not give way to the sin X., and I will not."

And then regard the difficulties there may be in the way of Sacramental Confession as the special discipline which God provides for you ; and persevere, waiting until He gives the opportunity.

As regards Counsel, it is no essential part of the Sacrament of Penance, though it is of course very profitably conjoined with it. But it may be sought apart from it. Laymen and women have often been the wisest advisers, though they (not being elect to the ministry) cannot give the sacramental restoration to the Life-blood. And, on the other hand, a priest who can surely give the sacramental restoration, may be incompetent to give profitable counsel.

On the whole, then, my advice would be to wait for Sacramental Confession until God puts it in your way ; meanwhile remembering that you must make the more diligent use of such means of grace as are in your power.

THE SAME SUBJECT

As to Confession, I suspect what Gore meant to say, was what the First Book of Edward VI. says : those who use it are not to blame those who do not, nor those who do not, to blame those who do. I think myself that some people are better without it, not because of their using it badly (in which case what should have been for their wealth, is to them an occasion of falling), but because they do not need it. When one thinks of the saintly persons who have never used it, one sees how possible it is for forgiveness to be given without it. Our Lord no doubt ordained Absolution, and nature suggests Confession as the most suitable path for Absolution, and the Church has always freely used Confession ; but we must remember that neither our

Lord, nor His apostles, nor the Church for many centuries, laid down a law of Sacramental Confession.

The matter is, for us, left to our own consciences, and, while we recognise the freedom of others, we are bound to ask whether our own conscience calls us to use it. And to give it up, though it might conceivably be right, yet needs jealous scrutiny, first lest we give it up because it is irksome, and next whether we give it up, because we are disappointed by its results, that it has not delivered us from our bondage. In the latter case, it is not fair to blame the Sacrament for our own feeble use of it.

And while we abstain from judging others, we should remember that there is a certain presumption in favour of using a means of grace which Christ has provided. We need all helps against sin ; here is a help which our Lord has provided ; are we wise in going without it ?

I am not sorry you have this doubt. I think it will result in your being more "fully persuaded in your own mind," and not acting just as others, however holy, taught you to act. Only pray about it, and remember that our English liberty lays upon us greater responsibility, and believe that the Holy Spirit is ready to lead you into all truth, and at all events be slow to give up a practice until you are sure God does not mean it for you. Our best prayer is "Lord, what wouldest Thou have me to do ?"

ADVICE ABOUT CONFESSION

There is something in Dean Butler's life to the effect that Sacramental Confession is specially useful to two classes : those who are escaping from deadly

sin, and those who are very much in earnest in trying to serve God. By His mercy you belong to the latter class, and therefore it will be well for you to consider whether He is leading you to Sacramental Confession.

And, first, you must not doubt for a moment that God is absolving you, alike in your private devotions and in the Absolution at Holy Communion. If you find that He is setting you free from the bondage of bad habits, that is the tangible evidence of absolution. If He did not break your bonds, no one else could.

But there might be several ways in which Sacramental Confession would be good :

1. As a way of doing honour to God. If Achan (Josh. vii. 19) thus gave Him glory, so may we.
2. As an impulse to more energetic service.
3. Sometimes a Priest detects weak points which have not struck the Penitent, suggests methods of meeting temptation, etc.

There is always, I suppose, a *presumption* in favour of using any means of grace which our Lord has ordained. I do not mean that the presumption is conclusive ; only it makes it more likely that the ordinance is for us than the contrary.

So I would advise you to think over the matter and pray about it, and claim the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit. And if I can help you in making up your mind, I shall be very thankful. But I should not advise you to make a Sacramental Confession before your Easter Communion. Even if you were quite decided in favour of doing so some time, yet you would require some time to survey all your life. If indeed you were burdened with the sense of some sin which would keep you from the Altar, then it might be right to make your Confession at once ; but, thank God, this is not the case.

Make your Communion, then, at Easter in the confidence that God is with you as the source of Resurrection, and seek counsel from Him for the future, being confident that He will guide you.

THE USE OF CONFESSION

I think you may (or rather must) be quite sure that your decision, reached after careful thought, much prayer, and in a docile spirit, is surely the Will of God for you. It would not be like Him to bid us pray for guidance, and then let us err for want of it. The matter is one in which there is no one course of action laid down for all of us. If there were, we could not pray for guidance whether to act in that way or not, but only for strength to do what God has declared to be right. We could not pray, for instance, for guidance whether to receive the Holy Communion or not, because that our Lord has clearly decided for all His disciples. But He has not told all His disciples that they must use Sacramental Confession; and so we are bound to ask whether we personally should use it or not, and, having prayed rightly, to be fully assured that our conclusion is taught by God.

And it is no small thing that we should be sure that we have heard the voice of God. It turned Samuel from a serving-boy to a prophet, and should make any one who has received it, full of faith that God does indeed guide us, and of hope that He will continue to do so. It must be a great incentive to continued prayer.

If I add a few words about another point in your letter, it is not because I in the least doubt, or would suggest to you to doubt, that your decision is guided by God; but for two reasons. The one is that, though

at this moment God guides you not to use Sacramental Confession, it is not in the least impossible that at some other time He might guide you to use it: a thing which would be undesirable at one time being quite possibly desirable at another. And the other is that you may very likely be asked for advice by others.

It is, no doubt, impossible for any one to make an absolutely perfect Confession, partly because of ignorance, which fails to recall things just as they happened, and partly because of defective illumination: on the one hand our imperfect perception of what God desires of us, on the other hand our inability to see precisely what motives are right, what are wrong, in so complex a thing as our conscience.

But the same difficulties meet us in all attempts to serve God. Many of our faults we hardly discern; and sometimes we think that a fault, which was really a faint striving after right. God is dealing with very imperfect creatures, and He does not suddenly lift them above their imperfections. But He does see, and care, that our hearts are set upon doing His will, that so far as we see it, we are resolved to do right, and hate the thing that is evil; and the illumination which He gives to enable us to know the essential difference between good and evil, grows until it develops in us a sensitiveness which is not likely to go far wrong. We shall indeed never perfectly judge ourselves till, at the great Day, we shall "hearken what the Lord will say concerning us." Meanwhile we must not be confounded because of our necessary incompleteness.

OMISSIONS IN CONFESSION

I would not have you worry over sins which you forgot on Good Friday. You had tried, I think, honestly to remember and confess them, and you confessed "these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember"; and the absolution was "from all your sins." So to regard them as unforgiven would be to distrust God.

I do not think, then, that you need, or should, examine into your life in the past. The only reasons why this should be done are—

1. To stir up gratitude: "Such was I, yet God loved me."

2. To stir up humility.

3. To gain warning against temptation. "If Satan tempted me thus ten years ago, I must be prepared for a recurrence of the like temptation."

But I do not think that, even for such reasons, it would be well for you to give much thought to the past. Rather look to the future, and to the way in which you can reward the Lord for His goodness. Beware of sadness. It is usually distrust of God's goodness.

But, without examination into the forgiven past, your memory may very probably recall sins which you accidentally forgot in your first confession. Perhaps God does not let us remember everything at first, lest we should be saddened or bewildered. Sins thus remembered should be mentioned in your next Confession: thus "I omitted through forgetfulness last time to say that when I was fifteen, I did so-and-so." In this case you do not confess the old sin as if it were not forgiven, but in order that you may take the

shame of it. There is no need to confess little slips of which you are not quite sure whether they were confessed or not; indeed, it is better not to do so; *e.g.* in his first Confession X. confessed that when he was ten, he used to crib his Latin lesson. Something now makes him remember that he cribbed his French too; but there is no need to mention that. But if he confessed "When I was ten, I told a wilful lie and stuck to it," and now remembers that he did so again, when he was about twelve, he should confess it.

CONFESSION—PRAYER

Although the general advantage is on the side of resorting to the same confessor, yet there is some advantage, when God orders one's life to be a wandering one, in going to any suitable priest who is at hand. It is a practical confession that we seek, not the priest, but Him who speaks through him, in the Absolution. Sometimes, too, a stranger sees faults or suggests remedies which one's ordinary confessor overlooks. I remember one Christmas being obliged to defer my confession till my regular confessor was inaccessible, and going to a church on the chance of finding a priest. He whom I found was a very young man, and for a moment I felt inclined to go elsewhere; but I thought this was pride, so made my confession, and received advice which was just what I needed. Nor should I abstain because a priest had little experience in hearing confessions, provided one thought him to be a good man and a believer in Absolution. After all, men must learn experience by practice. One need not ask for advice, nor is one bound to follow it, if it seems unsuitable, unless it is

enjoined as a condition of absolution, *i.e.* if a priest says, "I cannot believe you really penitent unless you promise to do X." Then one must either do it or show reason why it cannot be done. But if he says, "I should recommend you to do Z," and you know it to be impossible, or not suitable, you are by no means bound to follow it. It is St. Paul's case: "I speak, not the Lord."

Prayers for guidance can only be granted when we have acquired the docility which is needful for obedience. A soldier is not impatient to know his general's scheme; it is enough to know the next thing which is to be done. God may, or may not, wish you to make your confession before A. B. next week; but at all events He wishes you to be gentle at home, and patient in your prayers for guidance, to-day. This achieved, you will have practised docility which may be rewarded with a clearer knowledge of His Will.

It is a common trial not to be able to speak about Confession (or often other Sacraments) to one's intimates. But, after all, it is an honour to have a secret in common with our Lord alone. He only, by His Holy Spirit, searcheth the heart and knows its deepest things. At least, the things which we cannot speak about are saved from the possible degradation of becoming mere ordinary matters of conversation.

It is not easy for brothers and sisters to live together. They are like consecutive notes in music, which are discordant just because they are so much alike; or like different shades of the same colour. I suppose that the general purpose of God is that families should break up. In marriage it is not only that the wife shall "cleave to her husband," but that she should "leave her father and mother." To some extent diverse occupations secure this end with you;

but it is well to recognise the difficulty and to provide against it by leaving a little space between sisters. Of course, if God does not concede this it cannot be necessary; but it is not wrong to desire it, because it falls under the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation."

The surest way of keeping a wish from becoming selfish is to pray over it, not merely asking to have what we wish, but trying to see our wish is dependence on the Divine Will. And nothing which is of interest to God's children can be of no interest to our Father, or unworthy of prayer. In many cases, indeed, prayer extirpates desire, for the thing which we set our hearts upon often seems hardly worth caring about, when we have been thinking about it as members of Christ and children of God. "How could I cry for beads," we may say, "when the King offers me diamonds?" But as long as we do desire a thing, that is to say, as long as it seems of interest to us, we not only may, but should, pray about it. We like our children to tell us their little plans, hopes, fears. And few things do more to cultivate a filial relation to God than prayer about small things. They show us God not sitting on His throne, but "humbling Himself to behold the things in heaven and earth." Perhaps to Him there is not much difference between an angel's intercession for an empire and a little child's prayer that his plant may grow into a pretty present for his mother.

May God "give thee thy heart's desire and fulfil all thy mind," chiefly by showing you what to desire, and by giving you the mind of Christ.

THE TEACHING OF ADVENT

Advent is not marked in our Prayer-book as a fast, as it is in the Roman, and I am glad, because the thought of Christ's return ought to make us hopeful rather than sad. Of course there is sadness too in the thought of our unfaithfulness, in His delay. Yet "look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Then Advent also (I think chiefly) speaks of Christmas and the Incarnation—our need of no less a Redeemer, God's love which purposed to send Him even when we were sinners and in darkness; and the wonderful way in which His coming was prepared. This is why the Church reads Isaiah now. I should suggest that you should read Isaiah privately also, studying it; thinking how dark things were then, and how much we see which prophets and kings desired to see, and thank God. Then ask yourself, "Am I really looking forward to the coming of the Light which will make all things clear, the purpose of God and my own character? Am I living as one whose secret things will be revealed: either as glorious parts of the great work of God, or as blurs upon its brightness, which will need to be burned up by His fire—the Holy Spirit? When you leave home for a time, it is best to lay aside your customary rule, and make a special rule (perhaps less exacting) for the time. *E.g.* at home perhaps you rise at 7 and breakfast at 8; but at your friend's house where breakfast is not till 9, you might resolve to rise at 7.30 and so get a quiet half-hour to yourself before breakfast, which it might be difficult to get later. We are right to dispense ourselves from self-made rules in cases of need; but not

to retain them and yet break them, for this is lawlessness. Yes, go carefully over your notes, trying to see what progress you have made, and what weak points need special care, and throw yourself upon the Divine Mercy which was born at Christmas.

RULES FOR LENT

I should make the first rule to relate to punctual rising. Not too early. Better resolve on 8 and keep it than resolve on 6 and half the days not rise till 7. Say to yourself the last thing, "I must rise at — to-morrow;" and when you wake, offer a little sacrifice to Him Who bore so much for you. It might help you to wear a cross and try to get into the habit of grasping it the first thing.

Secondly, try to pray daily that your work may be dedicated and blessed. It is not narrower than that of thirty years in the carpenter's shop. A work is great, not in itself, but in the glory of pleasing God. "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws, makes that (*i.e.* the room, well swept) and the action fine." Satan would have us long for other work than that which God prepares for us; it is often pride. Solomon says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccles. ix. 10). Be faithful in that which is least. "With God there is no last nor first," says Browning. You may be training your little brothers and sisters to be saints. So then, let your second aim be to do gladly what God provides.

Thirdly, you would gladly, if you might, do more in the parish. Do the greatest thing: make out a list of people to be prayed for; of course keep it to yourself; then divide them between the days of the week, and pray for them in detail; *e.g.* for such and

such a household : " Lord, Thou knowest that X. is a drunkard ; make him sober. His wife's thriftlessness strengthens his vice ; make her tidy. Little A. X., my pupil in Sunday school, is a good child ; show me how to help her, how to get her to be punctual, lest she grow like her mother. Keep her from bad influences at home." And so forth. In this way you will get to understand the hearts of the people, and to love them ; and when you have got some gift for them from God, He will make the way clear to help them. These three resolutions : (1) self-denial, punctual rising, (2) amendment of self, (3) charity towards others, will, I think, form a good Lenten rule. Of course, you must make it your own, not mine, by adapting it where you think it needs modification, and by weekly, if not daily, oblation of it. Be thankful that you are not exposed daily to new temptations, which you could not foresee. You know each day what you will be tempted to do. Pray and resolve. Keep Sundays chiefly for thanksgivings : (1) for redemption, etc. ; (2) for special blessings ; (3) for clear answers to prayer.

EASTER RESOLUTIONS

This letter will not reach you till Easter Day is past ; but it brings my best wishes that the Feast may be as blessed to you as the Fast. I think it is very necessary to make a rule for Easter. It must not be penitential, because we are as much bound to " keep the Feast " as we were to humble ourselves. Perhaps these suggestions may help you. First, try to keep up as far as you can any habits of prayer and Bible reading which you have acquired during Lent.

Second, substitute devotions of joy for those of penitence, *e.g.* when you used to say the 51st psalm, say the Gloria in Excelsis or the Te Deum; read the end of the Gospels, and thank God for the Resurrection, and its hopes and power; also the Acts of the Apostles, which are really the Acts of the Risen Lord. Thirdly, do duties (especially disagreeable ones) as an act of grateful love; "Because Thy Resurrection is my life, I will rise early that I may serve Thee." "I will use my redeemed life by teaching that wilful A. or visiting that cross B," etc.

I suppose that the Saints looked for joy not in the relaxation of duties, and devotions, but in contemplating the Mysteries that make them joyful. They "rejoiced in tribulation;" so may we in disagreeable duties, if we remember what has transformed such duties into sacrifices. In Lent we think chiefly of ourselves and are sad; in Easter we think chiefly of our victorious Lord, and are glad, even though the same duties and trials abide with us. In order that we may do this, we must cultivate faith in the Resurrection; studying what is revealed in Holy Scripture about it; making acts of faith in it; making use of it as a motive to holy life. And especially in the Blessed Sacrament try to leave self behind, and see Him Who is "making all things new." Self-contemplation is the danger of depression, so the Church only gives forty days to its special practice; now come another forty days for the special contemplation of the hidden life of the Resurrection; and then the glory and strength of the Ascension. God bless you and keep you till the Resurrection.

DISCOURAGEMENT AMID TRYING
PEOPLE

I am sorry that you cannot give a better account of your progress. But you must not give way to despair, for that is distrust of God. If you have failed, He has not, and He still offers the grace by which alone the saints have been victorious.

I dare say you are right in thinking that the fault is often not on your side; nor is it well to force oneself into blindness of the faults of others, for this would be to disuse the common sense for the use of which you are responsible, and to base your efforts after amendment on a falsehood or exaggeration. Rather look at the case like this: every fault in those with whom you live is known by God, Who put you with them, possibly to remedy their faults, and certainly to be disciplined by them. Suppose one had to live with an entirely capricious and inconsiderate person; perhaps the example of our self-control might influence our friend; more likely our prayers might help him; most certainly we could find in his caprice a thousand opportunities of giving up our own will and doing that of the Master. Suppose we were to allow ourselves to be simply impatient with him; should we not really be impatient with God Who put us to live with him?

I think you may find help in the following suggestions: (1) Try to think more of your life as a following of the Lord Jesus. When you are annoyed, try to say to yourself, "How would our Lord have acted? how can I act, by His grace, so that this trial may make me more to His glory?" (2) To this end, study His life constantly, pressing it home: "How

can I follow this example? How can I obey His command?" (3) Tell your troubles to Him, and as a rule to Him alone. Don't brood over slights, etc. The Apostles, when scourged, "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name." (4) Don't worry if by X.'s fault things are done which you think displease Him, or left undone which you think He would wish done. You are responsible for your own conduct, not that of others. It might work against His Will if the Bishop were to forbid me to hear confessions; it would certainly be against His will if I were to be angry, rebellious, disobedient. Suppose you wish to visit Z. and are not allowed; it may be really His Will that Z. should go unvisited; it would certainly not be His Will that you should be impatient. (5) Be systematic in thanksgiving, and in looking out for reasons for it.

(6) Never forget that God desires to sanctify you. To this end He called you in Baptism before you could choose Him.

God bless you. You will find Heb. xii. 1-14 good.

PREPARATION FOR A CALL TO THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Now about your question. It may certainly be the case that God is calling you to the Religious Life; and I do not see anything contrary to this possibility in your present feeling of the sacrifice it would entail. Abraham had the long journey to Moriah with everything to make him realise what he was to bear; the son walking by his side and the mountain growing nearer. God would not have us undertake a work in ignorance of the self-denial it will involve, lest when

the step is taken, we should look back and regret that we had ever taken it. And the Sister who has taken a great interest in the world is much more likely to be useful than she who has never cared for anything but good works and Services. Have you ever read the Life of St. Teresa? I think it would help you much; for although times are changed, the primal elements of human nature are the same.

Then I should try, if it were possible, to have an interview with some experienced Sister. . . . You would not be in the least pledging yourself to join either of these Communities, or indeed any Community; but you would learn what sort of things to think and watch and pray about. Then you must be very careful about your life at home, with the thought "If God calls me to become a Sister, I must be punctual, keep my temper, etc., so I will begin now." I have noticed that grace is often given after Profession to acquire good habits, but I think it is given to those who before Profession have been trying hard to acquire them. Profession does not create good habits in those who have not all along set their minds on them. I hardly like to speak decisively about the claims of your home, but for the present I think this point may be put aside. I do not think that, even if there were no home-ties, you would do well to go at once as a Postulant; and if the time comes when you are convinced that you have a vocation, we must trust God to show you how and when you should comply with it.

VOCATION TO THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

I suppose the way to every good thing lies through a narrow gate. A saint shows us how his vocation is

based on the Vocation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and what that vocation involved, in Phil. i. and ii., especially in ii. 1-12. Those whom God usually wills to call to be Sisters are not those whom nobody regrets at home, or those who break no home ties to come, but those who have learned love and usefulness at home that they may practise it on a wider scale. The disciples had forsaken father, mother, wife, etc., to follow the Lord. Support yourself by reflecting on the singular love of God which deals with us not *en masse*, but with a particular care, calling one person to one work, another to another. The Vocation to the Religious Life is not the only vocation, for every one has a vocation, though many do not listen to it. But it is such a special and conspicuous vocation as illustrates all other vocations, making us sure that God knows each of us, and cares for each of us, and provides each of us with means to serve Him.

May God bless you. You have chosen what you believe to be His Will. That the flesh will find it hard to follow the spirit, that the world will use discouragements, that the devil will try to pervert the best things,—all this is to be expected in this fallen world. It is to perseverance that the promise is given—to him “that endureth unto the end.” May He give you this precious gift of perseverance. Treasure in mind all that our Lord and His Apostles say about it; and be on your guard against wasting it by slackness in small duties. And remember that love of our Lord is the only enduring motive, and that it must be asked for as a gift, and studied in His acts, and practised in duties done to Him.

THE TRIALS OF A POSTULANT

I was not surprised that when you wrote, you were feeling the difficulty of your position. It is a real difficulty. Postulancy presents in an acute form the question whether the vocation is real; and, just because it rather forces the eye upon one's self, it tends to obscure the perception of the Will of God. That Will has to act, not as if from without, but from within; and as it rises to the surface of the conscience, it is apt to bring up with it all sorts of doubts and distractions. And then for postulants, and in a degree for novices too, there is the difficulty of leading the religious life without the certainty of the Religious Vocation, and without the strength which comes from the Benediction in Profession. It is rather like the unsettled time which many young people pass through from fifteen to twenty-five, when the old traditionary routine breaks down, and the new self-ruled life has hardly begun. I fancy there is something about this in the history of St. Teresa, but I have not time to look it up. At such a time our best habit, I suspect, is to look back at the conclusions of more tranquil times. You may say, "Two years ago, while I was quietly at home, I thought God called me; I counted the cost and came, and here I am. I do not indeed hear God's voice so clearly now, but as He cares for me, if He wants me to remain He will make His will known to me; and so also if He wants me to retire. I appeal from my present darkness to the light of the past, and to the clearer light which God will surely give me. Here He has placed me, and I wait for Him in the way of His commandments."

But very likely all this is now out of season, and

you have passed into a place of less perplexity. Above all place yourself again and again unreservedly in the Hands of God. Whether in the Convent or in the world, we have but one standard of life—to do God's Will as our Lord did it. Dedicate particular incidents of life to Him: "Lord, I am disinclined to prayer, but I will say this office with attention, that I may not wrong Thee;" "Lord, I dislike this piece of work, therefore grant me grace to do it well, that self-will may be mortified, and Thy Will glorified in me." It is by patient attention to details, bringing them under the inspiration of a great motive, that character is formed.

We may have rough seas ahead, but God will steer us.

A MESSAGE OF ENCOURAGEMENT BEFORE A NOVITIAE

I must send you one line of greeting and hearty good wishes before your Reception as Novice. May God's full blessing rest upon your dedication of your will to Him. He gave the will, but He gave also the freedom to dedicate it, and sees with joy the firstfruits of His grace. I suppose that, although we cannot leave out of sight our own purpose, there must be more comfort and hope in thinking of His Will Who calls us. Unless we were sure of this, it would be foolish presumption to promise anything at all; for we have little control over ourselves, and cannot tell what will be on the morrow. So the inquiry into a Vocation must be less asking whether we are called than asking whether He calls us. I believe He does call you. Otherwise I think you would have failed under the burden of the earliest response to that call

during your postulancy. That He has strengthened you so far is some proof that He is calling you; and this again is a pledge that He will call you further and further towards perfection.

No doubt you are very weak and wilful, and you are not entering into a life which will be easy. But this is as it must be. He does not call us because our hearts are worthy, but that our hearts may be made worthy; and there will be much *from* which He will call you, as well as much *to* which He will call you. There must be "many a blow and biting sculpture" to "polish well a stone elect." And in this I see nothing to make you afraid. He knows what you are, and yet He calls you—yet He delights in you. I would say, "Don't dwell too much on the struggle; rather transform it by the thought of His Vocation." He calls you to do beautiful things—to share His Will, to be like His Face. Every little act of self-sacrifice may be glorified in this way. A diamond does not shine in a dark room, but when the light falls on it, it is glorious. Do you know that the true translation of a verse in the New Testament is "whatsoever is shined upon is light"? So the prophet says well, "Arise, shine, for thy Light is come." It may be but a small exercise of self-sacrifice that is offered to you; but diamonds are usually small stones, but give much light. Try to cultivate a habit of light-heartedness. Don't think "How hard this is to bear!" or "How wicked I am to hold back!" but rather "How good is God to give me an opportunity of glorifying Him! just the opportunity that I need, and which He sees I need, because it goes contrary to my own inclination." Of course all this can be said in a minute, and can only be learned in a lifetime. St. Peter knew it well; yet to the end of his

life he was to be bound by others, and carried whither he would not. Don't be impatient with yourself. Why should you be, if God is so patient with you? God bless you.

THE EVE OF PROFESSION

I am very glad to hear through X. that, after the proving of your vocation, you have been elected for Profession.

I have observed that one of the most frequent gifts of the Holy Spirit at Profession is an enlarged sense of freedom. Not only is the Novice in a sort of ambiguous position, hardly knowing whether she belongs to the secular or to the Religious Life, but she has not yet had the opportunity of fully acting on her wishes and openly dedicating herself to God in the state to which she believes herself called. The generosity of dedication, itself inspired by God, is not left without a special reward and encouragement from Him. While Samuel lay wondering, or only came to Eli, he heard no more than a Voice calling him; when he said "Speak," a fuller revelation was given to him.

I think, then, that you may rightly expect at your Profession that God will own your self-dedication by a more complete gift of the spirit of service, which is freedom.

Yet side by side with greater grace usually comes greater trial. Our Lord, when He was anointed with the Spirit, was driven into the wilderness to be tempted. There is nothing amiss in this, and nothing terrifying. It is rather an honour from God, who, having given fuller grace, gives fuller opportunities of

using it, and esteems more highly the victory over temptation than exemption from it.

May He give you both the fuller grace and increased wisdom and courage in using it. Your Profession will be not so much the ending of your noviciate, as the entering into a wider life; not so much renouncing old things, as the claiming of new. If we are children of God, we are also children of the resurrection; and our eyes must be turned rather to the new possibilities than to the old aspirations, efforts, failures, successes.

God wills nothing less than to make us perfect. May His will have free course in you.

COMFORT IN FAILURE

I think you must not let yourself be downcast by failures. Is not that, perhaps, a sort of wounded pride? We thought we should do so well; then we fail, and are surprised and downcast. But the wonder is that God has cared to call us, and has done great things for us and promises to do greater. Think of that beautiful Psalm cxxvi. Our captivity has been turned; yet we pray, "Turn our captivity." "The Lord hath done great things for us already whereof we rejoice." If we realise that the Will of God is our calling and our sanctification, we can hardly be depressed by failures. No doubt God could sanctify us suddenly; no doubt He would do so much more speedily if we were more docile. Yet He usually seems to allot a long discipline to us; and St. Peter, who was rash and vacillating at the Passion, still had the same faults to correct twenty-four years later (Gal. i., ii.). If discipline is still irksome, it shows

that it is still necessary. The sculptor goes on chipping at the rough parts of his marble. Try to keep your eye fixed on our Lord as both example and help. The translation of a familiar verse is "Looking *away* unto Jesus, the Beginner and the Finisher of our Faith;" *away* from ourselves. I think it is a good rule never to make a self-examination without trying to observe in our Lord the perfection of which we have come short; and saying, "This is the perfection which is in store for me, to which I am called, after which I must reasonably strive." How much comfort there is in our being called not "possessors" but "inheritors" of the Kingdom of Heaven. We shall come into our possession, if we are faithful and patient.

SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL

Your letter was most welcome, even though it spoke of trials, for trials are to be expected by those who wish to follow the steps of Christ. I hope indeed that you will not be called to give up the life to which I believe God calls you. But if it should be so, it will only be a fresh call to perfect submission of will to the Holy Spirit, and so to perfect conformity with Christ. This has been your aim in following what seems to be a religious vocation; but we are too blind to say for certain that God calls us to obey Him in this or that particular form. After all, the mode of living is only a means to the great end which can be pursued wherever we are—the end which has been set before us from the beginning, when we learned to pray, "Thy will be done;" "Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee." So you will not be cast down, nor will you fancy that God has lowered His claims

upon you, if health forbids you to go on to your profession. It will only be that He desires some other form of service from you; perhaps that He honours you by demanding the most emptying form of self-surrender. God wants some people not to *do*, but rather to *be*. One would have fancied that a life of which thirty years were spent in a trade and only three and a half in teaching, was hardly the life for One Who came to enlighten the world; and again, one might have fancied that a life spent in poor crushed Judæa and Galilee was hardly that which befitted Him Who came to save the whole world. Yet that was what He chose. And on the Cross, when He might have preached so great a sermon, He was almost silent. Look at the Blessed Sacrament as teaching this lesson. How easily we might have conceived some Sacrament which would have seemed more worthy, a Sacrament of fire and trumpets, like Sinai. Yet our Lord chooses to come under the veil of the simplest elements of food, with nothing to terrify the unbelievers, with nothing external to force people to draw near. He is willing to be silent, undiscerned by many, profaned by many; only there He *is*. I remember how, after my ordination as deacon, Bishop King paused at the lectern after reading the lesson (Monday's) which ended with the words "John did no miracles, but all things that John spake of this Man were true; and many believed on Him there." Bishop King said, "Take this as a topic for meditation. You are ordinary men; you will work no miracles. But if all that you say of Him is true, many will believe on Him where you are."

Yes, supposing you can do no great works; supposing God gives you the life of an invalid; yet if you testify to Christ by your life and thoughts and

words, many will believe on Him. I have never heard more profitable sermons than from some who, in pain and weakness, could yet testify to their Master's presence and salvation. All things are ours because we are Christ's; and nothing can really be against us, because all things will be put under His Feet.

GOD'S GUIDANCE

I believe the right way of looking at life is to regard it as mapped out for us by God; "Good works that he has prepared for us to walk in." Not of course that scope is not left for our free will, to accept or (if we will) to reject His guidance; but in the many things which lie outside the disposition of our will, that we should try not merely to acquiesce in what cannot be helped, but to accept it as Divine Guidance. *E.g.* if one is bound to live in Paddington, not to fret because the society is narrow, but to try so to fulfil one's little duties there as to become fit for a larger sphere if God calls one there. Of course there is still room for choice and decision; but the main point is to regard what we cannot but have, as part of loving discipline.

THE POWER OF A SURRENDERED SELF

Your letter, with its happy news, reached me this morning. I do with all my heart rejoice that God has opened the way for you to that to which I have long believed that He called you. May He perfect you in it. There is certainly a special grace given by the Bishop's benediction, which will not only enable you

to fulfil the duties to which he will admit you, but will also enable you to conform your will to God's. There is no more beautiful or more true line than Tennyson's "our wills are ours to make them Thine." You have perhaps a greater difficulty than some in giving up your will; but I would have you look upon this chiefly as the opportunity for a more noble self-dedication than would be possible if you were naturally less disposed to be independent. There are two verses in the Mattins Psalms for the 16th which may be helpful to you: "Let Thy Hand be upon the man (woman) of Thy right Hand; and upon the son of man whom Thou madest so strong for Thine own self. And so will we not go back from Thee, O let us live and we shall call upon Thy Name." God in giving you an independent will, has made you "strong for His own self"; though when this will is dedicated to self, it is, as you have found, the greater weakness. Fix it then on not "going back" from Him; seek to "live"—to possess the true life, and you will have the priestly office (compare Ps. xcix. 6) of "calling upon His Name."

THE TRIUMPH OF GRACE

I have long been prepared for your news, and can hardly regret it, if your dear N.'s trial is coming near its end. It has indeed been a discipline of grace, and it has done its blessed work. We try to resign ourselves, but the work is best done when God Himself provides the special form of self-denial which we need. It would not have been possible, nor would it have been right, for her of her own will to lay aside her work and remain so many years able to do little, and so many months able to do nothing. But God has provided this discipline for her, and has given her

grace to accept and use it, and it has sanctified her. She is brought to a point which is like that of our Saviour on the Cross, when He could not go about doing good, and when He could but say seven sentences in the space of six hours; but when He was completing under the most searching trial the surrender of His Will to the Father. Part of that time was indeed to Him a time of greatest bodily distress, when He cried, "I thirst"; and part was a time of unique spiritual anguish, which was itself the remedy for such anguish in us; for how can we dream that God forsakes us, when we see the love of the Father which gave up His beloved Son to this desolation? But it is restful to think, how after the clouds the light gradually returned to Him as He saw all that He came to do "finished," and at last there is that supreme breaking forth of the light, when He sees the due place which is His in the Father's Bosom, and victoriously offers Himself into the Father's Hands.

SERVICE AFTER DEATH

I thank God that your dear —— is at rest, released from her captivity. Her life was like that discipline of St. Paul—forbidden to preach in Asia and Bithynia, because a special work was reserved for him in Macedonia. I cannot doubt that a Macedonia is in store for her—some sphere in which she will be able to use to the glory of God the lesson of self-sacrifice and self-surrender which has been so persistently impressed on her. We have no right to be inquisitive; but when one remembers how many there are who pass from this world disheartened and with a sense of failure, may not she have the blessed task of meeting them, and telling them that she too had her constant

disappointments, but found God faithful; and thus helping them to begin the new stage of their training? It is perhaps like the dying mother in Browning's "Saul"—

"Let one more attest,
I have lived, seen God's Hand thro' a lifetime, and all was for best."

This may, or may not, be her employment in the new world; but of one thing we may be sure, that the lesson which was constantly impressed on her here, and which she so patiently tried to learn, will prove her training for her special work hereafter.

I shall not expect to hear from you until these days of darkness are over; for it must be darkness for us: God means death to be a sorrow, even while He draws us on to step into it with faith and hope and thankfulness.

SEVEN LETTERS TO A GIRL PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION *

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

When parents and children alike act on their own convictions, there can hardly fail to be a certain divergence. It is so when the son of a conservative becomes a liberal, or when the daughter of old-fashioned people takes to a profession. And our Lord clearly told us that one effect of His teaching would be to put son against father. In early days, the son of a pagan became a Christian, and was often cast off and persecuted. What is required is not identity of opinion or judgment (which would check progress) but mutual respect and forbearance. This, I think, your parents and you alike practise. No doubt they cannot agree with you, but they abstain from restriction; and you

* She was above the usual age of such candidates.

seek to make your divergent action harmonise with daughterly duty ; neither condemning the other.

I should advise you not to obtrude your convictions on them ; but on the other hand not to shrink from expressing them when they are asked. It seems to me easy to get into a way of letting silence grow into a barrier. If your mother asks why you think it right to do this or that, tell her simply. You will probably not convince her ; but you will keep up the habit of free communication, and will not let a shell of reserve grow between you. Don't shrink from a natural fear of seeming to her foolish. Your action may still seem to her foolish, but your affection will be made manifest.

I cannot think that the fifth commandment teaches the duty of never dissenting from a parent. With a young child it does so ; but when we have a judgment of our own, we cannot sincerely shut our eyes to defects. Our duty is twofold : not to differ rashly, and not to let our difference take the form of (even internal) contempt. When Noah was drunk, the duty of his sons was to screen his fault, but not to deny that it was a fault, or to force themselves into an insincere ignoring of it.

Nor can I think that a grown-up daughter is bound to follow her parents' opinion as to the use of Confession. If our Lord ordained it, it is for us to settle on our own responsibility whether we need it. I say nothing about prejudices which probably spring from ignorance as to what it is, and involves. It seems to me that if a daughter is old enough to decide what books she will read, what friends she will make, she is also old enough to decide what religious practices she will adopt. For my own part, I went to Confession during my father's lifetime, and never told him of it ; and although my conscience reproaches me with many

unfilial actions, this is not among them. If in due time you should decide on using Confession, I should think it would be desirable, though not essential, that you should tell your mother quietly, pointing out that you must exercise your own judgment; and she knows you too well to suppose that you would go, if it really were the debasing thing which perhaps she (like many others) supposes.

Meanwhile I should, if I were you, abstain from any pledges as to the future; how can you be sure which way the Holy Spirit will lead you?

I have my doubts whether it will be wise to make any marked difference on Fridays at the common table, or to make a rule of Church on weekdays. It seems to me that it would be simpler to make your fasting private; *e.g.* in your mid-day meal, and in using such little forms of self-denial as you find: no condiments, no novels, unless read out loud for the sake of others, a single helping at dinner, and the like. These are small self-denials, but character is made up of small things. The pricking of tools in the carpenter's shop prepared our Lord for the Nails.

Of course I do not advise this by way of concealing your faith (which would be cowardice), but by way of avoiding pain to others at the table. You know how anxious mothers are; and if you ate no meat she might think you were starving yourself, put down your next cold to insufficient food, reproach herself because she had forgotten to provide fish. Of course if the English Church, like the Roman, laid down a strict rule of diet, you would be bound to abide by it; but the English Church, while she bids us fast, leaves us very free as to the details of doing so.

As to Church on weekdays, it is a great blessing, but not a duty. You might perhaps try it for a month

or so, making an exception of very bad weather, and so see whether health suffers by it, and whether it causes your mother much anxiety. Likewise I think you should make Sunday Evensong dependent to a great extent on home claims, and stay at home if desired to play cribbage with your father, or the like.

Once more, I don't of course advocate this by way of avoiding censure or ridicule, but by way of filial consideration of your parents, when duty does not directly compel you to do otherwise.

It does not seem to me that you should blame yourself for past disregard of Sunday. Some laws of God are *natural*, i.e. such as conscience naturally teaches; e.g. "Thou shalt not steal." Others are *positive*, i.e. such as we should never have known if God had not revealed them to us. Of this sort is the keeping of Sunday. We should never have known it if we had not been taught; and you were not taught.

I think you were quite right in reporting to the firm what you had learned about the workman. You are responsible to them for the work being done properly, and it would have been unfair to screen him. And if the details you learned from the foreman threw light upon the workman's character and conduct, you were quite right in telling them. In such a case the ninth commandment seems to inculcate two duties: to have good reason, before speaking, that the statements were true; and to tell them not out of dislike for the man, but for the purpose of serving your employers.

Certainly one ought not to visit the sins of the parents on the child. The child of wicked parents is in no way to blame for their misconduct; rather, he is to be pitied, because he is at a social disadvantage. One should therefore do all one can to help him. It

is with the vicious person himself that the Apostle bids us "No, not to eat"; *i.e.* not to condone vice in him. The practical application of this precept is often perplexing, and St. Paul himself tells us that it applies only to professing Christians, *e.g.* I think one might rightly have dined with George Eliot, but not with a professing Christian who acted as she did.

With regard to the sins of childhood one must remember that (1) they were bad in proportion to our then knowledge and power, and (2) they were the seed of subsequent wrong. "The child is father of the man;" *e.g.* the meanness of a schoolboy who cheated at marbles may lie at the root of subsequent dishonesty in the stockbroker. So one cannot disregard early sins in trying to know ourselves; rather, the stockbroker, if he is penitent, will ask himself, "When did I begin to be dishonest?" and will ultimately remember the cheating at marbles. But here as elsewhere we must remember that some sins are mortal, *i.e.* deliberate and wilful; and others are venial, *i.e.* springing from defects in our disposition. Compare cheating and quick temper. It would neither be possible nor desirable to try to remember all occasions of venial sin; *e.g.* how often we were cross as children—only the more salient cases, as when we struck a person in temper, or tried to starve ourselves. Of course, sins of later life are far more serious, just because there was more will-power which might have been exercised to control our actions. It would be very bad indeed if I were to steal to-day; but it was also bad if I stole when I was five.

I think a list of questions by the Commandments is useful in helping us, as the Prayer-book urges, to "examine ourselves by the rule of God's commandments." But to a great extent we must make the

questions ourselves, using the printed questions rather as suggestions. The spirit of the second commandment seems to me the duty of worshipping God as He requires us to worship Him, not as we think or like best.

I should think that unpunctuality is radically a sin against the fourth commandment—not using time for the glory of God. I believe the best remedy is to make one or two fixed points of time, *e.g.* the time of rising, and that of going to bed, and keeping to them; and trying gradually to bring the whole day into order. Don't encumber yourself with too elaborate a timetable; and don't confuse cases in which you break the rule from indolence with those in which you break it from obedience to other claims: *e.g.* blame yourself if you rise late on Monday from sloth, but not if you rise late on Tuesday because your mother wishes you to stay in bed and cure a cold.

Blame yourself if you sit up too late on Wednesday to finish a novel, but not if you sit up late on Thursday to finish a book you are reading to your father.

George Macfarren used to say that the first lesson for a musician was to keep time, and the second, to break time.

TO THE SAME, ON CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Now to answer your welcome letter. I am so glad you have had a talk with your mother, and that she has been (as I expected) kind and wise. I do not think that you need fear any strain or distance. After all, that which draws and binds people together is love; and "love is of God," and therefore the more you have of the spirit of God, the more unselfish and

loving you will be. I do not forget, of course, that too often we make religion a barrier between ourselves and our neighbour; but that is because our religion is often not full of God, but full of self and our own tastes and opinions. I remember that when Professor Stuart first stood for a seat in Parliament, Scott Holland asked him how it was that he, coming straight from Cambridge, could enter into the mind of London artisans; and he simply answered, "It is Christ." Not that the artisans are as a rule religious, or could understand Stuart's mind, but that Stuart found in Christ a link with every man.

As to Confession, I am very strongly convinced of the wisdom of the English rule, which leaves it to each man's conscience, neither enforcing nor restraining it. But I do think that an ordinance which the Church (carrying out her Lord's provision) has appointed under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has a very strong presumption in favour of it. The real question seems to me, not "Must I use it?" but "Can I wisely and safely disregard it?" If you feel the need of it, that it is just what you need—that you will be losing a desired help if you do without it: then I should say that the Holy Spirit is leading you to it, and that you ought to use it.

It may perhaps help you if I draw your attention to the relation between Confession and Absolution. Confession is the methodical display of one's whole life before God. He knows it all, but He wishes us to know it, because it is not His will to work without our co-operation, and unless we know our faults we are not in the way of amending them. Take the learning of a new language by way of example. You are learning French, and you bring a French exercise to your teacher. He sees the blunders in a moment, but

he requires that you should see them too—that you should discern the false spellings, the wrong concords, etc. It is just so far as you are convinced of your faults that you can amend them. So long as you think that “*Une bons home*” is good French, the best teacher will never teach you to write “*Un bon homme*.” Again, your grammatical confession must be methodical: not merely the recognition of isolated blunders, but the recognition of the rules which you have never grasped. Nor will it be any advantage to own in general terms, “I am a bad French scholar.” You must own the particular badnesses. So, when St. John would teach us the way of gaining pardon, he says, “If we confess our sins,” not if we confess that we are sinners, *i.e.* he demands of us a detailed and methodical confession of our sins, as far as we can remember them. Of course human infirmity makes this confession at best very imperfect; but God requires of us the exercise of the powers we have, not of powers which we have not; and diligent searching of conscience makes the confession much less imperfect than we should have expected.

So far I have spoken of Confession merely on its intellectual side—the recognition of certain events. But it is more than this—it has a moral side. All the sins which we remember have caused grief to a loving God, and many of them have wronged our neighbour. (And sins against our neighbour are more extensive than we should suppose at first, if only because all sin injures our own character and makes us less able to serve our neighbour. For instance, a priest’s neglect of study makes him unable to help a person who comes to him for help.) Our confession therefore must be made in regretful love; as, for instance, one might say, “I have been late in rising; thus I have

disordered the household, grieved my friends, and wronged God by having only a few hurried moments to converse with Him in prayer." In gaining this sorrow it is well to remember that God reveals Himself to us under human forms. If He be our Father, we may think how a father is grieved by the unlovingness of a child; if he be our Master, we may think of our own offence as the indocility of servants.

Once more, we must bear in mind the way in which one sin leads to another. Indolence, for instance, leads to want of prayer; want of prayer to a low standard of life; a low standard to failure under pressure of temptation. Here again we must be prepared for imperfection. Very often we shall not be able to trace the roots of a sin, but we must do what we can. It will very often lead to radical amendment.

All this is about Confession. Much of it would be quite true if the confession were only made in our own room privately; and much more if it were made to a mother or some wise friend, who would help us to see ourselves truly. But our present concern is chiefly with confession made to God in the presence of a priest. What special advantage may be gained by that?

In the first place, the priest is one who is set apart for the very purpose of dealing with sin. He has, or ought to have, studied it and its remedies. He helps us to see ourselves; he gives suitable advice; and our intercourse with him is not a mere conversation, but a sacred and awful interview. Moreover, he is bound in the most solemn manner not to divulge anything of what he hears.

Then he is the ambassador of God, and his presence helps us to realise that the confession is really made to God. And he is the ordained representative of the

Church (the word *parson* is really *persona ecclesiæ*, the mouthpiece of the Church). Of course, when it is possible, we ought to confess our faults to those whom we have wronged; but death, distance, and other circumstances often make this impossible, and the priest is the ordained representative of the Church.

But, further, he is specially commissioned by Christ with the remedy for sin. Our Lord said to His Apostles, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted;" and this commission is handed on by them to every priest (see "Ordination of Priests" in Prayer-book).

Now what is meant by this Absolution?

In the first place, the Absolution is not, and cannot be, any other than God's. No priest dreams that he has any absolving power of his own: he says expressly, "By His authority committed unto me I absolve thee" (see "Visitation of Sick" in Prayer-book).

He speaks as God's ordained witness and ambassador. When South Africa is subdued, the Queen will send her representative to establish order there. He will speak in her name and by her authority. People will bring their cases to Sir Alfred Milner (if it should be he), and what he declares will be the Queen's authority. No one will suppose that Milner is claiming to be king, or will disregard his authority because he is only a subject.

The priest then, first, declares God's good-will towards all men, and especially towards penitent sinners. All this we know well, but it comes with special force and comfort from one who is accredited to bring the assurance.

But his absolution is more than this. He not only testifies to God's grace, but he communicates it.

Absolution or forgiveness on God's part is not a change of mind on His side, so that He will no longer regard our sins, but it is a gift of grace by which He looses the bond of sin. When He forgives, He grants us grace by which we can rise up and sin no more. Just as in Baptism the priest gives new life to those who were dead in sins, so in Absolution he restores that life to those who have wasted it. His absolution is like the medicine which the doctor gives, when we have laid bare our disease before him : he gives that which will cure the sin.

So then Confession and Absolution are distinct from each other. Why are they frequently combined ?

Because Confession enables the priest to decide whether a person is, or is not, fit to receive Absolution. The gift of grace, if given to a person who is not disposed to use it rightly, does him harm, not good, just as a gift of food may injure a sick man, or a gift of money makes a prodigal more reckless. If a priest were to give the grace of Absolution (*i.e.* the Divine Life by which sin may be overcome) to A. who is penitent, and also to B. who is hardened ; it would benefit A., but add to the sins of B. And the only practical way of discriminating A. from B. is that they should make confession. Even thus the priest may be mistaken, just as he may be mistaken in his bestowal of the grace of Baptism on C., or that of Holy Communion on D. But this is only part of the necessary imperfection of the "earthen vessels" in which God stores His treasures ; and it is to a great extent safeguarded by Confession, and, one may well believe, by the guidance given by God to a faithful priest.

One help to him in deciding whether the sinner

should be absolved or not is Penance. In early days a considerable punishment (*e.g.* a prolonged fast) was imposed before Absolution, and only on the fulfilment of it was the person absolved. Partly from necessity, partly perhaps from laxity, this rule has been relaxed; penance is now usually a light discipline (*e.g.* saying the Penitential Psalms), and Absolution is usually given before the Penance is performed, on the strength of a promise to perform it. There are however cases in which a priest, doubting the sinner's penitence, will defer absolution till some disagreeable duty (*e.g.* restoration of stolen property) is performed. But in any case penance is not that by which we may purchase forgiveness, but that which assures the minister that repentance is genuine and therefore that absolution may be safely given.

One word about advice. The priest's business is to reinforce and guide the sinner's conscience. He will not therefore dictate what the penitent ought to do, but will guide him to see it for himself. Of course he, knowing the real character of the penitent, will often be able to give useful advice; but he will not, if he is wise, try to dictate. Of course his advice to a conscientious person would be a suggestion, to a person whose conscience is dull it might be almost a direction; but in every case his object is to guide, not force, the conscience.

And another as to questions. A good confession makes questions unnecessary. Such questions as are necessary are such as "How often did you act thus?" "How old were you when you did that?" "Have you resisted temptations to do so again?" It is a general rule that a priest should not question about any subject which has not been mentioned: *e.g.* if the penitent said nothing about stealing, he would not

be questioned on the subject. In the case of ignorant people this rule would not be binding, because they may not know how to express themselves. Controversial books speak as if every one who came to Confession were asked all sorts of horrible questions. Such questions would only be asked of the most depraved persons, if they came to confession, and did not seem able to make a clean breast.

TO THE SAME, ON DAILY DEVOTIONAL HABITS

So we shall look forward to your receiving the Sacrament of the Holy Ghost on March 18th. May He so prepare you that His Special Presence may find in your will an instrument ready to harmonise with His. It is natural to regret that this gift was not sought and given years ago; yet I think we do most wisely when we look upon the past as embraced in the purposes of God who brings good out of evil, and look forward to the more fruitful reception of the Gift, now that you have come to hunger after it more than might have been the case, if you had been confirmed as a child. It always seems to me that as we are "children of God and of the Resurrection," the duty we specially need to practise is hope: the most difficult of all virtues to many of us, who have been taught by failures that Hope is not a mere optimistic expectation of good things. Watts' picture is, to me, a great lesson: Hope, weary, her eyes bandaged, her feet sore, her harpstrings all broken save one; yet over her head the steadfast star.

Now let me add a few words as to the religious

observances of every day. Of course, when it is possible, it is a very great privilege to attend Church daily ; but it is difficult for most people, and one must not burden the conscience with it, as if it were a duty. When it is impossible, there is the more reason for being very methodical about private devotions. It is well to fix the time for them as far as possible, and keep to it punctually, unless some duty makes it impossible. If one can foresee occasions on which it will not be possible to keep to the rule, it is best to modify it, or even set it aside, by a definite act of the will. " Lord, while I have this cold I cannot rise at 6.30 for my prayers ; so, remembering that the illness comes from Thee, I accept Thy guidance, and will not rise this week till 8."

Do not resolve on too much. It is better to promise twenty or thirty minutes' prayer than an hour ; for the longer time may well prove more than we can give regularly. At my first Retreat I wrote a resolution to meditate one hour a day. The Conductor, whom I consulted, struck his pencil through the " one hour," and wrote " twenty minutes," saying, " You may keep to the hour for a time, but you will find it difficult, and will be tempted to be irregular ; whereas you can well afford twenty minutes."

Suppose then that you resolve to rise daily at 6.30, and to give from 7 to 7.20 to your morning devotions (though I don't want to dictate the times, which you can fix for yourself better than any one else). How shall you divide the time ?

First, kneel down and thank God for preservation through the night, and ask to spend the day well : the third collect at Mattins, or its spirit.

Then I should advise you to read three or four verses of one of the Gospels—more or less according

to subject, but not too much: praying for light to profit (*e.g.* Collect for Second Sunday in Advent, for Whitsunday, or the like). After reading it say, "Lord, who hast taught me by Thy Holy Word, show me what practical lessons I am to learn." Then try to think how you can act better for being reminded of Christ and His words; *e.g.* after reading St. Matthew viii. 1, etc., it might be, "Lord, who didst not shrink from touching the leper, I will try to overcome any feeling of dislike to X. when I see her to-day." Or, after to-day's Gospel,* "Lord, I will try not to give way to anxiety and depression." Let the resolution be usually very small: some little thing done better for the day's remembrance of Christ. If you find it helps you, you might note down in a private book your resolution: *e.g.* Nov. 10th, Christ teaches the Samaritan woman when weary. I resolve not to be slothful about writing my letter to Z."

Such notes you might look at during the day, *e.g.* when you go to your room before meals, to refresh your memory; and it might often be helpful to recur to it at future times. Don't hesitate to resolve the same thing again and again. It is by constant repetition of the same good effort that character is fashioned.

Having tuned your mind, so to speak, by this Bible reading and meditation, then finish your prayers—

1. For yourself, asking especially for such graces as you need specially, taking pains to forecast any special duties or temptations likely to occur during the day.

2. For others, living and departed.

At mid-day, or before the mid-day meal, it is a

* Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

good habit to refresh the recollection of God by prayer.

At night (when you will probably find it less possible to be punctual than in the morning) begin with thanks, then examine yourself to see how far you have kept your good purposes, and pray for others. If you have time for Bible reading, it might be a Psalm or a few verses of an Epistle.

Besides this reading of a few verses daily, it is a good thing at times to read a considerable portion (*e.g.* two or three chapters) consecutively. This keeps in the mind the general structure of Holy Scripture.

People differ as to the help which a book of prayers is to them, and each one must decide for himself. As a rule it may be said that such books are helpful, but that it is well to use them sparingly, not growing to depend on them. If you have not such a book, I should like to give you one, written by a friend of mine, "Before the Throne." Tell me if you have it.

TO THE SAME, VARIOUS COUNSELS

It is not easy to answer your question about writing results of daily self-examination. I used it myself at one time, and think I found it rather formal; but that may well have been my fault. On the other hand, it is a great thing to have a record of daily failings, that one may see whether a fault is growing more or less frequent. There are many faults which we can hardly hope to overcome at once, but which will require gradual and patient weeding out. For instance, such a fault as unpunctuality. It is a great thing to discover that, though one is still sometimes late in rising, it is less frequently the case than it was three

months ago. Bishop Wilkinson used to recommend a plan which secured this end, without any undue amount of detail. He advised people to write in a note-book the days of the month, and then to fix in one's mind a sign which should indicate each habitual fault: *e.g.* T = bad temper, U = unpunctuality, C = conceited talking. Then after each day's examination one would write against the day just the initials of faults which had been committed. The table would look like this :

" June 1, U. C.

" June 2, C. twice.

" June 3, T. for all morning.

" June 4, U., prayer omitted, etc., etc."

Then if there was anything specially bad on a certain day, one would write—

" June 5, U., T., told falsehood to obtain repute for cleverness:

" June 10, C., refusing to own myself in the wrong."

Such a table seems as if it would secure both ends, and it would disclose advance or falling back; and it would be less lengthy and formal than writing each fault in detail. I have never tried, but I know some who have done so with advantage, and I am inclined to think well of any plan suggested by such a man.

It is like many things. What is useful to one is useless to another. I should be inclined to say, try writing for a time, perhaps in such a table; and if it seems not to help, discontinue it. You are quite right in thinking that too much detail sometimes obscures the general view of life—whether it is becoming more obedient to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, it is chiefly by attention to detail that one can discover the

general trend of character, and can take warning against lesser faults which might become habitual.

In estimating the results of the table one must take into account general circumstances, *e.g.* in June there may be fifteen faults of temper, in July only five ; but if in July you have been having a holiday, and so have been free from certain worries, it does not mean a real progress. On the other hand, in August there were only three cases of unpunctual rising, in December there were twelve ; but you must remember how much harder it is to wake in winter than in summer, and not think that you have certainly fallen back so much in the latter month.

In the early days of the Church weekly communion was the general custom. With young people it is perhaps better that they should begin with monthly communion, and gradually come more frequently. But with you, who are beyond the usual age, and to whom God has given a really earnest desire to seek and serve Him, I should think it would be quite right to come at once to weekly communion.

It is, of course, a great privilege, and involves a great responsibility, but I feel sure you would value the privilege and feel the responsibility.

With regard to confession at fixed times, I think I should not leave it entirely to a need which you might feel. You will probably not often be tempted to grievous sins, which seem to form an imperative call to confession ; and it is easy to put it off if the sins are not of such an alarming character. I think I should fix on four times a year ; *e.g.* before Christmas and Easter and All Saints, and (say) about mid-summer. Then you would add other occasions as need might arise.

With respect to fasting, I think you would do well

to take what is prepared for you without scruple, seeking mortification in unobtrusive ways—taking less than you would like, or the less attractive thing, or abstaining from such things as sugar. I suppose fasting is to fulfil one or more of three ends: (1) crushing fleshly temptations; (2) teaching the body to be obedient by refusing it indulgences which it craves; (3) obedience to Holy Scripture and the Church. Putting aside (1), I think that any form of bodily self-denial can attain this end; *e.g.* that abstinence from sweets may be as disciplinary as abstinence from meat. Of course, if (3) the Church has laid down any precise method of fasting we are bound to obey; but it seems to me that the English Church, while she says Fast, does not prescribe any particular form of fasting. In the different parts of the Church the rules are different; *e.g.* in the East eggs are forbidden, in the West, not. At one time butter was forbidden in France, now it is allowed. And everywhere in the West the rule is greatly modified by dispensations. I believe the English Church leaves the particular form of fasting to our consciences and reason, as she does in many other cases, giving principles rather than rules. Naturally one would, where possible, comply with the general practice of the whole Church, and abstain from meat; but where this is impossible or for other reasons undesirable, I do not think one is disobedient if one takes meat, conscientiously looking out for some other form of real bodily discipline—something which will teach the body that it cannot always have what it desires. I think that, in your case, abstinence from meat would cause your parents distress and perplexity, especially as the household is so small that the abstinence of one-third of it would be noticed.

Small self-denials systematically observed do more

to discipline the character than severer exercises which are sometimes omitted.

As to Intercessions, I think we must surely pray with special earnestness for those whom we know best and love best. I shall pray for all who are confirmed at St. Augustine's, but I cannot pray with the same interest for A. B. and C. or D. as for you, whose Confirmation gives me so much joy and hope. So with the departed: my prayers for my father, whom I love, are naturally more earnest than for my grandfather, whom I never knew.

For those who have departed with a defective faith I have always felt a special call for prayer. There are so many reasons for unbelief, one of the chief of them being the unfaithfulness and ignorance of those who should have taught them. Sometimes I think people are really nearer to faith in God because they reject the debased form of Christianity which is popularly taught. For such people one may well hope that, when they see the truth more clearly, they will welcome it. I have hardly ever known an earnest unbeliever who has not confused Calvinism with Christianity. If (as I believe) all the virtues of your friend came from Christ, I suppose she is delighting in the newly gained knowledge of Him. We pray, of course, specially for the "household of faith;" but in such a way as to pray for "all men," learning in a small area the work which we are to carry out in a wider.

I am quite sure that no Christian ought to be weighed down with remorse. (I do not mean that Christians may not have to pass through this discipline, but it is an imperfect thing, and one which no one should desire, or consent to remain in.) When the Prodigal had reached home, the joy of his Father's

welcome must have filled his heart, though the very love filled him with compunction for having grieved and left so good a Father. I think great saints regard penitence as full of joy—the joy of being no longer ignorant and alienated. Joy and sorrow do not expel each other. Our Lord was a “Man of sorrows,” yet “for the joy which was set before Him, He endured the Cross.”

A depressed brooding over past sin hinders zealous improvement. Our mind should rather be, “O my God, how good Thou art! how could I have sinned against Thee? Grant that I may wrong Thee no more.”

TO THE SAME, THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This will be my last letter before your Confirmation. It brings with it the assurance of my hearty and thankful prayers. May He who hath begun a good work in you fulfil it until the day of Jesus Christ.

On Sunday you will receive the great Gift which our Lord ascended to give. He ascended that He might receive and give gifts unto men—that the Lord God might dwell among them. The Spirit of God is called the Finger of God—that which God stretches forth to do His will. Just as the hand of the artist carries out that which is in his mind, so the Holy Ghost carries out in us the Mind of God.

He does it by bestowing on us union with Christ. One of the Fathers uses this image. A signet is cut with a beautiful figure out of a precious gem. It is impressed on the wax, and makes (though in a poorer material) an exact copy of the gem. Christ is the precious gem; and we are the wax, which is to bear

His likeness. The Holy Spirit is the Hand which impresses the gem on the wax. "He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you."

Of course this is a matter of progressive grace, for we are not made like Christ by a single impression; nor are we tender like wax, but often hard and stubborn. Therefore the Spirit is given that He may abide with us, daily pursuing His work. At times we shall be weary and disheartened; but remember that growth in grace, as in nature, is usually slow. Thus the consummating gift of the Spirit is the grace of perseverance—to "bring forth fruit with patience." Take little heed of weary feelings; look to the promised help of the Comforter; confess your failings, and take courage in the thought that God cannot fail you. Do not lie abased on the ground, but rise again, and trust in Him, and persevere.

I think nothing explains better the scope of Confirmation, or forms a better prelude to it, than our Lord's words in St. John xiv. to xvi.

Remember that character is chiefly formed by little things, and that the formation of the character of Christ in us is the purpose of the Gospel.

Remember that perplexities are a necessary part of discipline. We cannot learn a language or an art without correcting, and patiently facing, and finally overcoming perplexities. Salvation is not the avoidance of difficulties, but the overcoming of them.

Remember that "This is the Will of God, even your sanctification." We will it a little; He wills it much. He will not fail to help us to that which He has thus at heart. We are not set to win uncertain blessings from a reluctant God.

Look at self little, at Christ much. The former is necessary, indeed, for humiliation; the latter is

necessary for faith, and out of faith righteousness takes its rise.

May God, who has put you in the right way, continue to lead you in it, till you reflect Christ's likeness as a mirror reflects the face.

TO THE SAME: CONFIRMATION

I hope the Confirmation was a solemn Service. I suppose the special note of the Holy Spirit's presence with us Christians is that it is enduring. He *visited* the Old Testament saints, but He abides with us (St. John i. 33). He need not therefore show all His strength at once, but gradually opens it out. He is not like a cup of water given to a thirsty man, but like a river from which we may draw every day according to our needs. One might say that the whole development of the Christian character is the perpetual drawing from that river, and using the water for each want as it arises. "They drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them."

And that which that "remaining" Spirit gives to us is Christ. He is the Priestly Spirit who brings Christ to us, and gradually forms us after His mind and character. Our Lord says, "He shall take of Mine, and show it unto you." The Spirit does not take the place of an absent Christ, but rather makes Christ present to us and effectual in us.

When our Lord was confirmed by the descent of the Spirit, the first result was trial. "He was immediately driven of the Spirit into the wilderness" (St. Mark i. 12). You must not be surprised or distressed if this should be the case with you, as it has been with many of God's children—if you find your heart cold, and temptations bitter. If so, it is

reasonable to expect the devil to show special malice to one whom God has favoured ; also that God, having put into your hands the "sword of the Spirit," should let you meet the enemy against whom the sword is to be used. Whatever your feelings may be, you have the assurance of His presence by whom you can overcome.

TO THE SAME : BEFORE A FIRST COMMUNION

Your last letter gave me great happiness. You have received a great gift, and when you get this letter you will be on the eve of receiving the greatest blessing which even God's generosity can provide. It is, I suppose, not accurate to say that in the other Sacraments we receive gifts from Christ, and in the Holy Communion Christ Himself ; for all Christian Sacraments are life-giving, and therefore convey Christ Himself. In Baptism we are really grafted into Him ; and in Confirmation we are really made partakers of His Spirit. The difference is perhaps on our side rather than on His. In the Holy Communion the way is made open to us through His Flesh into the inmost secrets of the Godhead. There is consummated our union with Him, and His with us.

The first thought must needs be of God's loving condescension when He makes us partakers of His Bread—for so the Sacrifices of the Old Law are described, and such the Sacrifice of the New Law is in truth. Human life is a shadow of Divine ; and common participation of a feast is the common sign of friendship, so that we feel we have not fully shown our friendship until we have invited our friend to share our meal. But this is not all. Our union with

Christ lifts us into the sphere of His Sacrifice, which is the constant loving presentment of Himself to the Father. Communion is Sacrifice: it is the offering to God of all that we have and do, in union with the glad entire self-oblation of Himself as our Saviour. It is the cure of selfishness, which is living for self rather than God. It is the ground on which, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we can do all to the glory of God.

I find that people differ very much as to the use which they find in a book of devotions. But my own conviction is that it should be used only so far as it helps to perfect our own devotions. I look upon it as the stick which a lame man uses when he begins to walk, and with which he dispenses more and more as he gains the use of his limbs. It saves our prayers from becoming irregular; when one is cold it suggests fervent thoughts, and it reminds us of things for which one might forget to pray. But it should not check or supersede the free access of children to their Father.

I am going to suggest (for you to use or not, as you find desirable) a habit which some people have found helpful in preparing for Communion. It is to select before each Communion, and to write down, three special subjects: (1) a petition for self; (2) one for some other person; (3) a thanksgiving. *E.g.* they might be, (1) to pray for the grace of prudence; (2) to pray for the conversion of A. B., a blasphemer; (3) to thank God for relief from temptation to sloth. The paper might be taken to Church as a reminder. It would help to check wandering thoughts, and would not hinder any other devotions. The word Eucharist means thanksgiving, which must form a great part of our devotions at the Altar. It enables us to face the fact of our sins without depression. "By the

grace of God I am what I am." I think this is specially necessary in penitential seasons. You will perhaps remember G. Herbert's words, "dear feast of Lent."

Be careful to make some one definite (usually small) resolution at each Communion. If it is a resolution which spreads over several days, it is well to write it down for remembrance. *E.g.* "In gratitude for this Communion, and by the power of Christ whom I have received, I resolve to ask pardon of X. whom I have offended," or "to give ten minutes every morning this month to intercession," or the like. Be content usually with small promises. They can be kept, and they are fit for our weakness.

It is useful to have a note-book kept in a locked drawer for such notes. You can refer to it, and no servant will pry into it, and sometimes it is helpful to look back and see what resolutions one made ten years ago. If it is marked outside "To be destroyed unread in case of accident," you need not fear it falling into wrong hands.

You will feel leaving your old work, and your kind friends. But it is good that you can serve your dear parents; and here "nothing continueth in one stay." Life is always "forwards": God grant that it may be "upwards."

NINE LETTERS TO AN INVALID

I am delighted to hear how much better you are, and especially that you are recovering your speech. It must be very trying not to be able to speak. It was perhaps one of the trials of the Passion, when for six hours He Who spake as never man spake was almost

entirely silent. How He must have longed to say more, whether to comfort His mother, to strengthen His disciples, or to convert His persecutors! I suppose the thirst of exhaustion, made more distressing by the bitterness of the sip of gall—not enough to deaden pain, but enough to dry the tongue—may have been the physical reason of His silence; but the deeper and more spiritual reason must have been His readiness to glorify the Father whether by speech or by silence, which made Him in a way like an infant.

Lord, sanctify my lips, that I may glorify Thee alike by speech or by silence. And He was silent among blasphemers, who misrepresented His words. You, thank God, have loving eyes close to you who try to read your signs, and to understand the wants you cannot express. How tender He is to us! He lets us have a draught of His cup, lest we should fancy ourselves separated from Him; yet He alone drinks it to the dregs.

TO THE SAME

I am very thankful to hear that your improvement still continues. That it should be slow is, I suppose, inevitable with such an illness, and very possibly it may seem to you slower than it really is, for as you regain strength you may be more sensible of your weakness. It is with the body very much as it is with the soul, when a person who is beginning to overcome sin is more conscious of the power of sin than he was, when he lived contentedly under its sway.

But I am sure you are comforted by the knowledge that, weak or strong, you are equally under the loving care of our Father, Who alone gives strength. Last Sunday night I preached at S. Augustine's on the

Canaanite woman whom our Lord seemed not to heed, and whom He even called a "dog." His roughness was the most perfect tenderness, for it led her on to the deepest humility and the strongest faith, so that He made a saint of her while He was preparing her to receive what she desired. When God seems to take no heed of our prayers, it is because He is leaving us time and space to grow in ; and what gift could be so precious as that we should grow in "the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ" ?

TO THE SAME

I am sorry that Miss —— cannot give a better account of you. I suppose that such drawbacks are to be expected ; but perhaps expecting a trouble does not make it easier to bear. The only thing that does enable us to bear a trouble is the certainty that it does not come by chance, but that it is sent by Him Whom our Lord reveals to us as our true Father, perfect in love and perfect in wisdom. How He must grieve when He is compelled to afflict His children ; and how He will rejoice when the affliction has done its appointed work, and He is able to give the relief which He desires ! I think this trial must be sent to produce in you some beautiful fruit of patience and trust, so that at least in another world, you may be the better fitted to carry out the blessed work of serving and saving others which is given to us, because we are united to Him Who bore our pain, and bestows on us His grace. I do not fail to pray for you. May God bless and strengthen you.

TO THE SAME

I am sorry that I do not hear what we generally call "good news" of you, but that you have had more weakness and pain. But Christmas surely teaches us how foolish we are if we think these things bad. Our Lord came into the world in order that He should be weak and should suffer; but He Himself tells us that He thought these things gain, if by bearing them He put to the test more fully the faithful love of His Father, and was the better able to do His will. "I come to do Thy will—I am content to do it." So you are able to know more fully than you could in your days of health how faithful and mighty God is, and you are able to do His Will just by the opportunity of giving up your own. May this beginning year bring you these real and certain spiritual joys in increasing measure, even if it does not bring you recovery of strength and freedom from pain. Your life is not less precious in God's eyes, when you lie and suffer patiently, than it would have been had you been able to live more actively and carry on your works of mercy.

TO THE SAME

I wish the news of you were more such as one could desire. It must be very trying to you to have these partial improvements disappointed. But it seems to me that God is dealing with you in respect of health very much in the way in which He deals with us in other matters. Life is, it must be owned, full of disappointments; but it is so in order that we may learn gradually that we have nothing we may safely hope for but the fulfilment of that blessed Will of God, which has no false hopes or disappointments.

We have to learn that our real wealth is not in this thing or that, but solely in the holy God our Saviour. We cling to all sorts of things and they snap in our hands, in order that we may learn that God alone is firm and His commandment exceeding sure. May you and I learn this lesson with patience.

TO THE SAME

God chooses your trials for you in this new year; or perhaps it would be better to say that He chooses the virtues He specially desires to form in you; and perhaps the most important of these is patience. Patience is a virtue that goes together with all others; for there can be no good thing without patience. It is like a scented leaf, such as verbena, which we put into a nosegay, at one time with roses, and at another time with lilies, and it adds to the sweetness of both. It is the virtue of God Himself, Who waited patiently for the fulness of the times before He sent His Son into the world; and our Lord possessed it when He was subject at Nazareth; when He bore with His faulty disciples, and when He hung on the Cross. Nor is He less patient now when He bears with our infirmities and coldness. So no wonder that we have to learn this virtue in many ways, for it can only be learned by repeated exercise. I love to think of the grace you may be gaining by this long trial of patience.

TO THE SAME

God is giving you a long trial of patience. Patience is, after all, just the same thing as the joy of Heaven, only it gets coloured by the imperfection of us who

have to exercise it. For in Heaven we shall have no fuller bliss than to accept the blessed Will of our Father, and all these months you are learning to accept it. It is very hard at times, but that is because we have not fully learned that God's will for us is good. Saints who have learned this do not only submit to what they cannot escape, but embrace it, and are able to rejoice in tribulation. A difficult lesson indeed; and that is why God finds it necessary to teach it so long and painfully.

You remember the hymn—

“ *Many* a blow and biting sculpture
Polished well those stones elect.”

You have “many blows” to bear, and so has a diamond, which has to be cut and polished on every side in order that it may flash out its true beauty in the King's crown. I think of you as weak and suffering, but I think of you also as you will be, polished and beautiful, and able to help others in the next life, and, still more, able to shine gloriously in the light of the King.

TO THE SAME

A day or two after you get this, we shall be keeping the Feast of the Holy Angels. How clearly it shows that we are precious in His sight, that He makes Angels to take care of us! When we hear of a mother who takes every care and bears all expense that she may give her child a good nurse; or when a father pays much that he may send his boy to the best school, we see how great a parent's love is. So we see the love of God for His children in the care He takes to give us as guardians, not faulty beings

like ourselves, but Holy Angels, who, while they watch over us, "do always behold the face of our Father in Heaven." If you are tempted sometimes to think you are useless and worthless, remember that God would not give such a blessing to worthless creatures. It is because we are inheritors of the Kingdom that He thus trains us for it.

TO THE SAME

May our dear Saviour give you a rich blessing in this season of His death and Resurrection. He is now making you a partaker of His death; and you are learning what it was to Him to pour out His soul unto death—how He shrank from the cup and yet how He longed for it to be accomplished. The end of it was the perfection of patience and love, when He had borne all that could be asked of Him to prove His willingness to bear all that His Father laid on Him, and His faithfulness to us, since He would not save Himself by leaving us unsaved. It is His glory now not only that He lives but that He died. "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of Hades and of death."

And I am sure that all the sorrows we have to bear are not only things which we have to bear, but are themselves the very thing out of which our glory and joy will be fashioned. We shall carry with us the marks of the Passion, and they will be our glory.

RECOVERY AFTER A DANGEROUS ILLNESS

I think your life henceforth will have something of a resurrection about it, the glory of a life laid down and given back with increased beauty and power. It

will be so, I hope, even physically, for after this long rest and care we may hope that you will be stronger than before your illness ; and I am sure it will be so spiritually, for you come back to life with the sense of having been very close to God.

THE TRIALS OF CONVALESCENCE

I hope you won't find convalescence very trying. It often is so. The nerves as they regain vigour are sometimes irritable ; and then there are disappointments, when one cannot do as much as one thought possible. I should not advise long devotions—just an act of thankfulness for recovery, and of dedication of strength and weakness alike ; and then either rest or else diversion by reading, etc., as you are disposed. Don't scruple about being lazy. It is part of your recovery. If you use up all your regained strength, you will be prodigal. It is no more really lazy to lie doing nothing just now than it is to do so every night of one's life.

THE THOUGHT OF DEATH

I do not think it altogether amiss that your mother talks more about death. It is a sure thing, and one which it is well for us all to face ; and for many years now I have tried to keep it in mind, not with a tremulous anxiety, but as an important matter which it is well to face. I dare say the thought comes with more intensity to her, as she has always enjoyed such vigorous health ; and probably when it has become more familiar, it will be less obtrusive. I don't in the least suppose that the thought of it means that there is any new physical mischief. Of course thoughts

about the future must arise when she is making plans for the future. Very often, when a thought first arises in vivid novelty, it takes a more important place than is due to it; and I can remember well how the expectation of an endless life after death filled me for a time with terror, and I could think of nothing else. Gradually, however, it sank into its proper place, and I learned to see that the prospect of unending life, which was terrible because I had not yet fully believed in God who takes care of all life in this world or another, led me on to a more restful faith in Him. I cannot but hope that the thought of death, which is at present painful to her (and much more to you who hear her speak) will in time take its place among the reasons for calmer faith in God, without whom life would be a terror, and with whom death has little fear. But I am sorry for you both while the lesson is being learned.

ADVICE TO AN INVALID ON KEEPING LENT

Your sister tells me that you would be glad of a few suggestions as to Lent in a sick-room, and I gladly send such as I can.

First, I would ask you to notice that God Himself has chosen your mortifications for you. We who are well have to choose them for ourselves. He, who does all things well and lovingly, has chosen for you pain and weakness. The more you are able to trace your distresses to His hand, the better you will bear them, and the more they will sanctify you. And the same is true with regard to remedies for pain. God created them, and gives them.

You will probably have two special trials. You will find it impossible to keep your mind fixed to prayer.

Do not fret about this. You could not keep your mind fixed to any secular matter, such as history or arithmetic. Prayer on one side is as much a matter of bodily brain-power as study. God knows your weakness, and will not think you do not love Him because you cannot speak much to Him.

The other trouble is nervous irritability. When we are sick the kindest services often worry us, and then we worry over our own conduct, because we have met love ungraciously.

Now, if you had a patient in this temper, you would feel it just to remember that he was ill and could not quite control himself. You would feel it would be not only unkind but unjust to blame him as if he were well.

If this is just with regard to another, it is just with regard to ourselves. You must of course try to check irritable thoughts and words, but you must not be unjustly severe with yourself when you fail. Sickness is sent to teach us what poor helpless creatures we are, and this is the lesson we must learn when we cannot control ourselves. Thank God, we have a Master who is gradually making us docile, and makes even our defects serve to teach us dependence.

I do not think self-examination is the proper work for sickness. It requires thought and equability of judgment which are hardly given to us then. Rather I think that the virtue which we can learn in sickness is Faith. This we want always to make penitence safe and profitable. The writer to the Hebrews bids us run the course set before us (and your course just now is sickness and weakness), "looking away to Jesus the beginner and the finisher of our faith," looking away from our faulty selves.

I think you might find it a great help to take each day some one history of our Lord's goodness, and turn to it again and again, not trying to fix your mind upon it long, but letting yourself recur to it from time to time, as one's mind recurs to a beautiful view or a musical air; resting in it rather than striving to catch at it. You know how our Lord on the Cross had words of the Psalms running in His head, quoting them or referring to them at least three times in the last three hours of His agony. And the words of Jesus are even more full of comfort than the Psalms.

TO AN INVALID

Somehow I feel that sorrow makes a closer bond between friends than gladness. Yet it is difficult to express sympathy, and I feel that I am urging what, too probably, I should fail to practise, when I bid you put your trust in God and wait trustfully. Yet I do so, not in my own name but in His who has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us, and who has given a pledge of His faithfulness in His blessed Son. In one way it is easier to trust when one has some view of escape; though on the other hand when there is something for us to do, there is also the anxiety whether we are doing it. In your case there is almost nothing left for you to do, only to stand still and see the work of God. I dare not doubt that He will give you that supreme gift of patience, and that the day will come when you will be able to see that He has dealt faithfully with you. You may not see this in this world, which is at the best so incomplete; but the Day of revelation will come. I often think that it will be

one of the delights of the world to come to trace at last how, when God had seemed to fail, He has really been doing some surpassing work. May He perfect you, dear child, in the patience of hope.

THE FAST BEFORE COMMUNION

May I just set down the elements of the matter of the fast before Communion which have to be taken into consideration?

On the side of the fast, one must take into account the fact that our Lord instituted the Sacrament at the beginning of the Hebrew day, when He and His disciples had taken no food save the sacred feast of the Passover; that when the Greek reckoning of the day, from midnight, prevailed, as at Troas, there the Eucharist was celebrated by St. Paul after midnight; that the custom of fasting before Communion has prevailed universally, with hardly any exceptions recognised save these: the case of infirm people and infants where they are admitted to Holy Communion, in some places, perhaps, at a late Celebration on Maundy Thursday, and certain cases of urgency. (Some monks in Egypt used to receive after food on Saturday night, but this was an eccentricity, probably of a Judaising character.)

On the side of a less rigid view of the case, I would mention, first and foremost, the principle that the fast was made for man, and not man for the fast, and thus it falls under the considerations which our Lord applied to the Sabbath; that the skill of doctors has probably reduced the robustness of the race by prolonging the life of those who in earlier ages would have perished; that consequently we have more tender habits than our fathers, not only as a matter of luxury; that the

increased knowledge of hygiene is specially God's gift to our age, and ought not to be disregarded, nor the professors of it, who are God's ministers for this thing. (It does not follow from this that we should regard the laws of health as paramount, as some do who make the preservation of health the one important matter; for in case of necessity higher duties overrule health, as when a doctor risks infection to save life.)

To sum up. I should say that the fast is a custom which should not be disregarded, but may be set aside in case of urgency; and that ill health together with the direction of the doctor is such urgency. If I were in the same condition as you, I should without hesitation take some food, as little as might suffice, before Communion and have no scruple of conscience; nor should I feel bound to mention it in confession, or to ask leave of anybody. It is not a *law*, which should not be set aside without dispensation from the suitable authority, but a *custom*, which one must follow or omit on the authority of conscience, when it can or cannot be observed. Although I do not think any bishop or priest has a right to give a dispensation, because I do not think there is a law to be dispensed, yet I am strongly of the mind that, so long as health requires and circumstances are unchanged, you will be acting strictly within the right liberty of conscience in taking food. And this was the opinion of Pusey, and since last year it has been allowed in the Roman Church, though under certain restrictions which hardly apply to us. Of course if health is restored, or a change of residence makes the fast possible, one would resume it. I should add that for the sake of example, and for other reasons, early Communions would be preferable to late.

THE SAME SUBJECT

Your question is not a very easy one, and is rendered more difficult by my ignorance of your friend. I cannot, of course, form an opinion how far her difficulty about fasting before Communion is real, and how far she might overcome it by an effort. If one allows the mind to dwell upon one's own feelings of weakness, etc., things are difficult which, if the mind were turned away from self and fixed upon the glory of the Lord, and the desire to serve Him with body as well as soul and spirit, would be possible. I know from my own experience that when I have fancied myself likely to break down in celebrating late, I have really been close upon doing so; and that the only way is to refuse sternly to think about myself.

Putting aside such questions as being beyond my knowledge, I will just say what is my own opinion about the fast.

In ordinary cases it has been the absolutely universal rule of the Church; and although our Lord instituted the Blessed Sacrament in the evening, it was the beginning of the Jewish day, and after no secular meal but the most sacred sacrificial meal.

But in cases of extreme sickness this rule has never been enforced. The real question is whether chronic ill health may be included in this allowance.

I think it is fair to remember that chronic ill health is far more common than in earlier ages. People are kept alive now by medical skill who would then have died. And probably we inherit a weakness from invalid parents, and cannot bear the abstinence of simpler ages. This is generally admitted with

respect to the Lenten fast, and should be, I think, with respect to the fast before Communion.

We have special difficulties in England, arising not only from climate, which makes us need more food than *e.g.* Italians, but also from the comparative infrequency of very early Communions and the absence of the reserved Sacrament. A delicate Italian can usually find a Mass at 4 or 5, and can be communicated at any hour with only a very short Service. Very different from waiting till 7 or 8, and then a service of 30 minutes or more.

I think, then, that there are cases in which the fast is practically impossible. Whether it is so in your friend's case, I am unable to decide. But if it is so with her, she should look upon her delicacy and the consequent taking of food as Divinely ordered, and do it with a quiet conscience as being God's method for her. And I should advise her to re-examine the question (say) every month, deciding that during November she will take food, but that before December she will consider again whether the exemption is still necessary, and professing to our Lord that she will resume the fast as soon as she is able. Many people who find the fast difficult in winter can practise it more easily in summer. I would suggest that before resolving to take food she should try such expedients as taking a cup of cocoa or the like at 11.30 p.m., and also receiving at the short Service on a week day rather than the longer Service on Sunday; also sitting during the earlier part of the Service, dressing and walking to church very slowly, and coming to church just in time for Communion, and not at the beginning of the Service. If such attempts fail, then I should advise taking before Communion as small a portion of food as will

suffice, and as long before the Communion as possible, with watchfulness to resume the stricter habit as soon as restored health renders it possible.

There is nothing in itself irreverent in Communion after food, for it is always allowed to very sick people. Moreover, considering the laxity of general discipline which God has allowed to prevail in the Church, it seems to me out of place to be a rigorist in this one particular while we are compelled to be lax in others. God directs rather than binds; teaches principles rather than precepts; is considerate towards our weaknesses. One of the most thorough Catholics I ever knew received in the evening, after food, at the death-bed of his servant, when I celebrated; and I believe we acted rightly.

MEDITATION

As to Meditation, I fancy different methods suit different people. Some books propose a very difficult method: an act of the imagination, picturing our Lord as He performed some act; a division into so many distinct heads, etc. If they find such rules useful they do well to use them; but to some of us they would be impossible. I suppose the essential thing is really to question God and to listen for His answer. The Advent Collect suggests the general outline.

1. God has caused Holy Scripture to be written for our learning; so we must believe He wants to teach us.

2. We must "hear," *i.e.* receive the Scriptures from the Church, and therefore not regard them as matters of private curiosity.

3. We must "read" for ourselves; "mark," *i.e.*

read repeatedly and attentively ; “learn,” *i.e.* call in the help of memory ; “inwardly digest,” *i.e.* apply to our own needs, just as food digested builds up muscle, repairs wounds, feeds the brain, according to need.

Suppose the subject chosen is our Lord’s appearance to St. Mary Magdalene. First read attentively : be sure you know the facts well : think what you know of her past character, etc. Then put aside the Bible, and go over the points considered by help of memory. Then ask the Holy Spirit to teach you what He wishes you to learn, to help you to form a resolution, and, having formed it, offer it with prayer. It is a good practice to carry away from the Meditation just one conspicuous thought (perhaps a verse from a Psalm) which you may recur to during the day.

As to hour of Meditation and precise details, try a few experiments until you find what really suits you best, and then make it your rule say for one month. If necessary, you can then modify it.

It is well that daily resolutions should be small ; *e.g.* to call on a person whom you can be kind to. Character is built up of small things done in the right spirit.

TO AN ORDINAND

I write a line to assure you of our loving thoughts and prayers during next week and on Trinity Sunday. It happens that the year I was ordained deacon (1872) Trinity Sunday fell on St. Augustine’s Day. On the Monday morning Canon King read the second lesson, and stopped at the lectern to propose to us the last verses for meditation : we were but ordinary men,

and would do no miracles; but if we took good heed that "all we spake of this Man was true," many would believe in Him where we were sent. May I hand on to you the best sermon I ever heard?

You enter the ministry at a very anxious moment. I imagine the task before us is to reconcile the immanence and the transcendence of God. Is the Gospel the product of the Holy Spirit within us? And is One come from God with unique authority to declare Him? Perhaps we are being prepared for the dark days when the Ordinances of God—even the Church itself—will be obscured, the "moon failing." At least one must try to keep one's eyes fixed on the sun, or, at all events, to believe in Him who gives light even when clouds obscure Him. Will He find the Faith upon Earth? We may pray that He will find Faith on earth—those who believe in Him, though their hearts fail for fear.

May God enable you to bear witness to the Truth; and as you pray for yourself, I venture to ask a moment's prayer for me, that my faith also fail not.

TO A TEACHER

The best teacher is the person who is called to teach. I remember asking Bishop Westcott if I was fit to teach theology, and his answer was characteristic—that he thought knowledge of a subject was secondary to interest in it. I am sure an informal friendly talk is often more useful than a regular catechetical class. The thoughts which take deepest root in us are those which are given by personal contact of mind and heart with mind and heart, rather than those which are given in a categorical

form, though the two modes are not antithetical, and may be reconciled. I feel more and more convinced that we have often gone on the wrong tack in teaching young people and others about the Sacraments, etc. We have said, "Come and you will receive a blessing;" but often they do not care about the blessing. If we put service rather than blessing before them we should appeal to, and stimulate, what is best in them, whereas the reception of a blessing is often a refined selfishness. If one could say to a boy, "You see what a lot of misery drink causes: you don't drink, but Dick does. Can't you do something to help Dick?" We should begin with an appeal to unselfishness; and before long the lad would begin to say, "Who am I that I should help Dick? I don't drink, but I do swear, and I cannot help swearing." Then comes in the other element, "If you really want to be more fit to help Dick, you must ask God to cure you of swearing; and that is what the Sacraments are for." Have I put my thought in at all an intelligible form? I do not know that this mode would win more people, but it would make those we win better people; and the great evil of Christendom is Pharisaism: "I fast, and let the Publican go to destruction without concern."

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN TEACHING

About Old Testament Saints or the Psalms: of course each teacher has his own choice about subjects. For my own part I think I should find the difficulties of the Old Testament almost insuperable for teaching in the way you suggest. To understand myself, and make more ignorant people understand,

the lives of the persons as living men ; to feel with them in the simplicity of their primitive culture and theology, to make allowances for ethical imperfections, and yet to retain a person wholly lifelike and interesting, and mainly worthy of imitation—all this I hardly know how I should do. It is easy, of course, to select an episode in the life of an Old Testament saint which one may apply to our own circumstances ; but what seems difficult to me is to take the whole life of an Old Testament saint and spread it upon our own life, so that life may pass from the saint to me. But then I fear I am not a sympathetic person. Ideas are to me much more vivid than persons. (This, by the way, is the consideration which specially convinces me of our Lord's Godhead, that in Him alone Idea and Person are identical and coextensive.) I should therefore feel myself more free with the Psalms in my hand than with the life of an Old Testament Saint. All Holy Scripture is written for our learning, though not all possibly for the teaching of every one of us. I do not know whether it is selfishness, or merely a mental characteristic given to me, which makes me so much more at home with Ideas than with Persons, with metaphysics than with ethics. But in either case it is a knowing "in part," and what is in part is to be done away. It makes me singularly unable to influence people, which is a good thing, and one for which, when I am sensible, I am truly thankful.

VARIOUS

May it not be that, as God is dealing with such imperfect creatures, a step which is not right in itself may be nevertheless the nearest to right of which the person is capable at the time? To serve God in real

devotion in the Catholic Church is the right thing ; but to serve Him with real devotion outside the Church is nearer the right than to remain in the Church without devotion. Certainly we ought to pray for what is revealed to us as the perfect will of God—that your friend should be sanctified in the Church ; but meanwhile we must be, as God is, very patient, and thankful that she is set on doing His will, though she is in ignorance of a great part of it.

As to your other question, I think that, as attending the Eucharist is our bounden duty on the Lord's day, one ought to do so whenever it is reasonably possible, without regard to what people may think of it. One may make people think, and come in time to understand our action. I should not say this about things which are not our duty—using the sign of the Cross, etc. Such things I should disuse when the use of them seemed likely to cause offence. Of course one must try to avoid giving trouble, as by keeping dinner waiting.

I am glad you are reading Pusey's life. It is a great example of patient faithfulness under misunderstanding. Have you read Church's "Oxford Movement" ? It is to me more interesting than Pusey's life, though it leaves off at the greatest crisis—Newman's secession. I can quite believe that Newman's secession was a providential step : he was too great a man for the feeble English Church as it was then, and the movement would have grown into a party. As it was, there were many men as great as Pusey, many of them not quite at one with him, and supplying what was deficient in him—F. D. Maurice, for example. It was a stupid blunder to call the movement Puseyite. That it never was. There was a danger at one time of it becoming Newmanite.

A HOPELESS CASE

These cases of inherited proclivity to evil are some of the most awful that exist. Of course one is familiar with the matter in its milder forms, as when the child of a passionate mother is disposed to be passionate; but in these cases there is reason to think that though there is special temptation to passion, it can be controlled by grace; and in fact one finds people who have a tendency to some fault do overcome it. But where the will itself is diseased it is a much sadder case. All one can say is that God will surely do right, and that He has ways which we do not understand. It may be that there is less opposition of will in such persons, just because the will is so degraded; and, again, it may be that death, which looses the bodily chains by which the evil inheritance is bound upon such a person, may be the first step towards his liberation. One can do little more than pray; and that we shall not fail to do.

THE SAME SUBJECT

You have indeed had a trying task, and may be thankful that you have been guided in performing it, even if you cannot see at present much hope for the poor girl. It is like the holy angels, who after all their loving care of their charges must often be disappointed. But they value their task because in it they see their Father in heaven; and whatever He commands them has a value of its own, just because it is the task He has set them. . . . For such persons the best hope is death, which will break the tyranny of the flesh, and may set the spirit free to begin again in a

more favourable sphere. And then the care you have given her will, one may hope, bring forth its fruit; and indeed it must do so, for works of charity are God's word, which cannot return to Him void, but shall perform that to which He sends it. And the awful truth of heredity, after all, rests upon that which is our hope—that we are not mere isolated units but partakers of a common nature, which is that which Christ has assumed and redeemed, and which He will perfect.

FACTORY GIRLS

I am glad you have had an experience of work in Lambeth. What you say about the comparative good behaviour of the girls is very interesting; and also that the work in factories does not seem to injure their health. We used to have a number of girls from Hoxton at St. Peter's, and I gathered that their life was by no means the slavery which Besant makes it, and many of them were good religious girls. The life, which seems to us so dull, has plenty of interests; and much that seems to us intolerable and filthy about their houses does not strike them as unusual. They were in every way superior to artisan girls from the west end, and had acquired a great deal of homely good sense which made them more like country people than I should have expected. It is no doubt good that they should be in touch with ladies; but I suspect that in this case as in all others, harm comes together with the good, and some of them will suffer from being brought into contact with a form of life different from their own.

THE RIGHT USE OF DISCIPLINE

I am more grieved than surprised that you have had difficulty with the club. It is not likely that Satan will let his fortress be assailed without resistance. You are quite right to use a good deal of discipline, though you must be careful to direct it by prayer and tenderness. Even the girls who are expelled may learn something of the austerity of religion and morality. It is a danger in such works to think that so long as we do not lose sight of a person, it matters little whether we make him morally better. This is the root of all the nonsense that is talked about the Church, because she is national, containing every member of the nation. She is comprehensive, but she is always an election. As to bad language, I suspect little of it is morally wrong. People say "Damn it" without any realisation of what the words mean. They use such words because they wish for emphatic expressions and have no linguistic power to express themselves. At the same time, I think it a duty to try to check such phrases, if only because one may use the opportunity to impress on people that there is such a Being as the God whose Name they use in vain. But I should not be discouraged if there were little success on purely moral methods in a matter which is in a great measure rather social and linguistic.

About the Retreat, it is generally the case that a number of considerations have to be borne in mind—the facility of going, the precise time, and other things. To many—perhaps to most—people it is an advantage to have such times of quiet thought; but I think there

is a little tendency to regard what is good for many as almost a duty to all. Certainly many persons live saintly lives without such helps; and some who go to Retreats as a matter of duty, do not seem to gain much from them. I should say that it is a case in which one should think over the reasons for and against going, and leave the decision to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which we have a right to expect.

PERSONALITY AND SOCIETY

Your words about X., and about your infirmity friends in general, interest me very much; I think the most depressing side of such work is that it is so difficult to find the personality of most such men. They have been ground down by the pressure of life, and it is hard for them to realise themselves or enable us to do so. Yet it was the personality of each man that our Lord discerned, and that which He loved and helped. Real Society, if it existed, would be like the diamond-wheel which polishes each gem and brings out its proper lustre; whereas the crush and rush which take the place of society just scrape down the features, as the tossing of a bit of glass among the pebbles on the beach scratches off the lustre which was there and leaves a bit of ground glass. But the photographer knows more the use of ground glass; and God has given you the art of using it. I am painfully aware of the difficulty of shyness, which may often after all be mainly indolent uncharitableness.

THEOLOGICAL AND APOLOGETIC

THE MIND'S ORIGINAL SYMPATHY WITH TRUTH

It is difficult to know whether Plato held a real pre-existence in another body, or whether what he says about this (*e.g.* Republic, viii.) is only his way of expressing that an individual embodies a Divine thought, each mind is created with a sort of impress of all truth, so that, when we come to experience a fact, it recalls to us the truth which it expresses as something congruous to us. One may use as an illustration a musical string tuned to a certain note, say A. It remains silent till it is brought near to (say) a flute sounding A; then a sympathetic vibration is set up in it, and it sings its own native A. I do not see how else we could ever come to know a truth at all, because experience only apprehends facts, and dialectic (logic) only deals with facts thus apprehended. Nominalists say that truth (*i.e.* general principles) are only the creation of human imagination after we have studied facts (*i.e.* particulars). This view seems to me atheistic (as if facts were prime existences and had no God of truth behind them) and immoral (as if facts did not express any general laws). Realists, like Plato, view the origin of things in the mind of God; and I do not see how out of the perception of 10,000 facts one would arrive at a single truth unless the truth were

already ours, called into the sphere of consciousness by sympathy with experience.

And this view seems in another way to tally with experience. Whenever we grasp a truth it seems not like a perfect novelty, but like something which we already possessed, though till a certain time we were not conscious of it. *E.g.* I might give the date when I first opened Euclid. But I can give no date when I first knew that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third side. When Euclid proved it to me, I recognised it as a principle already in my mind. So with the principles of conscience, right and wrong. No one ever proved to me that there is a moral right and wrong, but I can give the date when I first learned that X. was right and Y. wrong.

I don't think Plato or any true disciple of his would say that we had a precognition of facts—*e.g.* the date of Waterloo. These belong solely to the sphere of experience.

DIFFICULTIES, THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL

You were kind enough to urge me not to answer your letter in writing, yet I am going to set aside your suggestion, because I think I may possibly be able to suggest some lines of thought which have been useful to myself in not very dissimilar conditions, and I feel more sure of being able to express myself rightly with the pen than with the voice. You know how easily visitors to a foreign country misunderstand its customs. It is only when we have lived there awhile, got some command of its language, learned something of its history, that we can judge it rightly, and see that

what seems absurd often involves some great national principle. I think it is so with the Kingdom of God. At first sight it seems full of anomalies, and it is only when we have become (so to speak) naturalised that we begin to understand it. Even then it is to be expected that much will remain unintelligible, for if there be a God at all, it is reasonable to expect that His methods will surpass our understanding. A religion that should be perfectly intelligible would bear the stamp of not being divine. Only by living as citizens of the Kingdom we may hope to find its perplexities no more trying than the many problems which meet us in science. In science there are many difficulties we cannot solve, but the student has faith in an ultimate rationality of the universe which will very gradually be discovered.

Take a case which you mention : the apparent uselessness of much suffering. How can we tell what is the issue of it? Is it not possible that when we see things as a whole, we shall see that suffering has a very different place from that which at first we assigned to it? When I was a schoolboy I hated German—what was the good of learning that wretched grammar at the cost of many headaches? I begged my father to excuse me, and was angry when he would not, and thought him unkind; but now there are few things for which I am more grateful.

“Yes,” it may be said, “but you were human, and could learn from pain, and had many years to learn in; but how about the dog, tortured all his life, and with no future life to profit in?” I should answer that I see no reason why the dog has no future life, and much to persuade me that he will live hereafter; and if the process of the universe is evolution from lower to higher forms, I look forward to the day when my dog

will be as high as I am now, while I myself hope to have risen still higher. As Browning is assured, "There shall never be one lost good," so am I assured that there shall never be one lost pain, though there are many of which I cannot at present see the utility.

There is, indeed, one hypothesis which would seem to me to make hope unreasonable—the hypothesis that God is a Being who can ever cease to care for any one of those whom (in Oliver Goldsmith's phrase) He "loved into being." He will never abandon any man until He has brought him to reconciliation with Himself. He may find it needful to correct me with great severity as long as He finds me self-willed or rebellious or indolent; and in this He is like my dear old schoolmaster, who, although he loved me, was terrible when I told lies or shirked my work; but only because he loved me and wanted above all things that I should grow up a good and useful man. His punishments were but for a time and a purpose. When that purpose was fulfilled, then nothing could surpass his glad tenderness. I am sure it is so with God, and not only with respect to myself but with respect to any of His creatures. So long as any creature is alienated from Him, a place in His family is vacant. And, like the shepherd, He goes after the lost sheep *until He finds it*.

We speak of God as Almighty, but we should bear in mind that His might is not capricious. It acts according to the law of His own nature. He cannot make $2 + 2 = 6$, for this would be against the law of numbers which He has impressed on the universe. And He could not regard evil as good, for that would make moral chaos, and not moral reason, the law of creation. If He could act thus He would be a silly easy-going God, and not the Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ. Now, I conceive that He could not, for this reason, make us such that goodness on our part should be inevitable. That would be to make us mere goodness-machines, turning out so many tons of goodness mechanically, just as the engine turns out so much electricity without any power of consent or dissent on the part of the material used. It is by the constant presence of a possibility of disobedience that man can attain to a real obedience, voluntary, not mechanical. What God binds Himself to is not to make evil impossible, but to make good possible. This he professes to do by giving us in His Son the Holy Spirit of life, by whose power we *can* do rightly; and that not suddenly or at once perfectly, but by degrees, giving us more grace as He finds us using what He has already given. He no more expects us to reach holiness by a leap than we expect a man to climb a mountain in a minute. When we give a boy his first Latin book we do not expect him to read Virgil tomorrow; he must take in the strange language little by little, and we are patient with him, provided we find him really using the instructions we are ready to give him.

And if this is God's profession, the testimony of countless holy persons is that He fulfils it. They are by no means without difficulties and temptations; they have many failures, but if they persevere they reach, more or less, the goodness which is the only worthy thing for which God could have created them.

We are often disposed to cast the blame of our want of progress on our circumstances rather than ourselves. When I began photography, and made failure after failure, I cast perhaps the blame on my camera; nobody, I fancied, could do good work with so cheap a

machine; and I could not afford a better: what was the good of trying to do better work? Then I found the fault was in myself; I did not take the pains which were needed; and when I did take pains I found I could do good work with my poor old camera. Now, I think we are often inclined to think that our want of progress in spiritual things is due to lack of grace, not to our own neglect of what we have. Sometimes this leads us to think that elsewhere (say among the Roman Catholics or among the Theosophists) we should have more grace and be better people. I fancied this once myself. But, without discussing the theological question as to the nature of the Church, I found that I had certainly some means of grace—prayer, for instance, and the Bible; and I asked myself whether I was really making the best use I could of the helps I had. Did I pray and study and follow the Bible as this or that devout dissenter did? And I found the defect was primarily in my neglect of the grace which was certainly offered to me. I said to myself, “If, when I have really tried to pray and to guide myself by Holy Scripture, I find my Communions increasingly unsatisfying, then will come the time to inquire whether God does indeed give me in that Sacrament the Gift which our Lord speaks of; but for the present I have no right to doubt whether this is indeed Christ’s Body; any more than a man who eats only vegetables, or who bolts his food, has a right to doubt whether beef is nourishing.” You probably know Renan’s wise saying, that there are not many people good enough to have a right to doubt the Christian religion. There is a danger lest people who change their religion for any lower reason than that God calls them, should be like the sick man who, impatient because the course prescribed by the doctor

requires long patience, buys the quack medicine which professes to cure in three days.

One more point I will touch. I don't think it can be said that disagreeable things are always the course of holiness. Our Lord "came eating and drinking," and the first appearance was at a wedding-feast. I think He put first the question, "What would God have Me to do? If to do God's will I must bear pain, so be it; but if God gives Me a pleasure, I must use it, giving Him thanks." Giving up pleasant things just because they are pleasant is not Christian asceticism but Buddhism. The Christian will use bitter and sweet alike so far as each conduces to glorifying God. And in both reason is necessary—to ask, *e.g.*, such questions as, "If I read this novel, shall I be gaining mental refreshment, or shall I be neglecting some duty which ought clearly to be performed at this moment?" It might certainly be right to read the novel on a wet afternoon, but wrong to do it when it hinders a visit of kindness which I ought to pay. God did not make pleasant things in order that they should be indiscriminatingly shunned.

I think we often get confused by too careful an analysis of motives. They are usually mixed: I give alms partly because I care for the poor man, partly because I like to be thought generous. Well, I will go on giving alms, trying to think more of the poor man's need and less of the esteem he will have for me. My act will probably be imperfect, just as my Italian is; but if I go on practising, the good will gradually prevail.

I do not think I can say anything now about the question of work; further than to say that a work undertaken for God's glory should not be laid down unless there is reason to believe that God desires the

change. In that case it is right to lay it down, for in a few years God Himself will call us away from all our present works. It is the old Pauline case : Eat or eat not, but in either case give thanks.

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY

No, I don't at all think Christianity is above criticism; that is to say, I don't think there is any demonstrative quasi-mathematical proof of it; nor do I think, from the nature of the case, that such a proof is conceivable or would be profitable.

For belief seems to differ from intellectual conviction just in the fact that there is a moral element in it. I accept the conclusion of a proposition in Euclid merely as an intellectual being: that I am a bad man does not hinder me from accepting it; that I am a good man does not help me to accept; that I accept it does not make me better or worse than I am; that I fail to recognise it shows that I am stupid, but does not show that I am vicious, or tend to make me so.

But religion has to do not only with the intellect, but with the whole man—conspicuously with conduct. The whole man therefore must be brought to consider it, and in this there is at once an element of dubiety. A purely intellectual demonstration will not convince the whole man. His heart, his hopes, his conduct must have their say.

It is so with almost every matter. Take, for instance, my trust in my father's character. It is not demonstrable. If a man told me that fifty years ago my father cheated him, I could not disprove the statement. All the accounts of that time are destroyed; I hardly know where my father was at that time; I

cannot remember him then : it is possible that he changed for the better between 1848 when he is said to have cheated and 1868 when I was old enough to judge his character. Yet I refuse to accept the man's estimate of my father's character, at all events until he brings very weighty reasons.

Again, I think that Botticelli is the greatest painter and Wagner the greatest musician. A person may argue that Botticelli could not draw like Andrea del Sarto, that Wagner sins against musical grammar ; yet he will find it hard to convince me that my regard for these artists is wrong.

Again, I believe that the old Pretender was the son of James II. You may use many arguments against my belief—the story of the warming-pan and others ; yet, considering what seems to me the probabilities of the case, the record of contemporaries, the likeliness of such stories being invented, the Stuart character of the Pretender, I am still convinced that he was the son of James II. And if I were a Jacobite, I should be prepared to give my life fighting for him, even though I could not refute all your arguments.

In each of these cases there is something more than intellect which forms my conviction : affection makes me believe in my father's goodness, a mystical turn makes me believe in Botticelli and Wagner, a habit of discrediting gossip makes me believe in James. It is true that in each of these cases there might be demonstrative proof that I was wrong : a written expression by my father, a detailed analytic criticism of the artists, a narrative in the handwriting of James II. But till that comes I hold, and think myself justified in holding, to my old conviction. I do not admit myself unreasonable because it is true that something more than logic goes to my conviction.

How does this apply to the Christian religion? It is a religion which, though diversely assailed in every age, has held its ground. It has been associated with the vast growth of modern civilisation. It has trained in every age noble men; and for the sake of it in every age noble men have been ready to suffer. It has proved itself capable of adaptation to many nations and many ages, taking various forms in detail, but everywhere maintaining the same central faith in Jesus Christ as the Son and the manifestation of the Father. It enlists my affections and influences my conduct; and does not only appeal to my intellect. When I say that I believe it, I involve all this—not merely that I think it can be logically proved.

Now, if the logical proof were absolutely convincing this moral element in belief would be crushed out. If, for instance, I had been in the room at the time my father is said to have swindled; if I had kept notes of the transaction; if I could bring documents to prove beyond controversy that the facts alleged did not take place: then my father's action would indeed be cleared, but the element of character—his known and tested character of probity, and my character of veneration and affection for him—would have no part in the conclusion.

Imagine that the case for Theism were capable of such rigid demonstration—imagine that beyond all possibility of hallucination, your eyes could see God. Then theism would have no moral value. Belief in God would stand just on a level with belief in the lamp-post. You would know as precisely what God wills as you know that the fire wants coals; and you would obey Him, if you did obey Him, just as mechanically as the ship obeys the rudder: unless

indeed a subsequent sort of uncertainty came in, and you debated whether the God, thus seen, had a right to command you, and whether you were wise to obey His commands.

Perhaps you will allow, then, that in moral belief demonstrative certainty is impossible and undesirable. But you will remind me that we want something more to dispose us, as moral beings, to believe in Christianity. We want, if not a certainty, at least a presumption that it is true.

I think we have such a presumption in the fact that Christianity has, to a great extent, accomplished the purpose which it pretends. It pretends to be the perfect revelation of God in human life, beyond which no revelation can go, and which is energetic in moving men to a noble life.

I do not think it can be questioned that, so far as experience shows, Christianity is the absolute revelation of God. No other religion practically competes with it. Paganism dies out under its light. And those who do not accept the Christian religion fall mostly into one of two classes: either they praise and accept the moral standard of Christianity, or else they advocate a different morality which seems to us, at least, much lower. I do not think any one has, in a single instance, propounded and followed a higher morality, or, if a theist, has a nobler conception of God, than one which was published in an obscure corner of the earth by a Jewish peasant 1800 years ago, and which has inspired countless people since then. I cannot but think that a religion which has such credentials, and has exhibited them for a long time under most diverse circumstances, may rightly claim a strong presumption in its favour.

Nor is it to the purpose to urge that a majority

of those who call themselves Christians do not live this noble life. The promise of Christianity is not to every man who calls himself Christian, but to those who actually try to act according to Christian principles. I do not read the Gospel as promising to make all men good, but as offering to those who study to be good the highest incentive, the noblest standard, the most effective aid.

Now let us turn to consider the arguments against this presumption.

First, we have a right to ask that the opponent to Christianity, if he ask us to listen to him, be a man competent to understand this presumption. If he is not a good man, really desiring to be noble, he can no more understand the moral argument for Christianity than a savage can understand the æsthetic argument for Botticelli.

We all know the provoking person who judges everything by a rule of three; who, like the Wrangler of tradition, does not care for "Hamlet" because he does not see what it proves; who analyses a joke, and cannot see what we laugh at; who, when we talk of the harmonies of Wagner, says, "You are wrong; it is in the second act, not the third, that the passage occurs." I very often come across the same man in objections to Christianity. Because one could not prove the Resurrection in a court of justice, because it may not be quite certain who wrote the Fourth Gospel, because St. Paul uses an argument from the Old Testament which does not seem to us conclusive, he at once concludes that Christianity is a romance. I do not deny that this person may do us a useful service if he makes us careful in our statements; but I think he is incapable of apprehending the real argument of Christianity.

Then there are those who are not usually in earnest, and therefore not morally capable of appreciating the evidence of Christianity. Renan says that a man ought to be very good before he disputes the Gospel; and I think we have a right to expect an objector to Christianity to be good before he is worth listening to.

Then there are good and noble men (I thank God for them) who do not accept Christianity. My own experience is that they confound one of two abuses with the Christianity which they reject: either the tyranny and superstition which Rome has mixed with the Gospel, or the immoral doctrine which Calvinism has substituted for it. As a rule they hardly doubt that the religion they reject is Christianity. Before listening to an objector to Christianity I should like to be assured that he knows what Christianity really and historically is. My experience is that while such persons have studied the sceptical side in the writings of H. Spencer and Huxley, they are generally content to take their knowledge of Christianity from a very casual acquaintance with the Bible, and from stray sermons and the reminiscences of the nursery.

Moreover, there are very few writers of the present day who argue that Christianity *is not* true. They usually take the line that there is nothing to prove that it is true.

Huxley, for instance, admits that a miracle is not impossible, only he thinks there is not sufficient evidence for it. Here, then, we get back to the question, What sort of evidence is sufficient? It is one of the remarkable things about Christianity, that it is able to assimilate philosophies which seemed to contradict it. Some years ago it seemed as if Darwin's theories, if true, must destroy Christianity. Now we find

eminent followers of Darwin convinced Christians, *e.g.* Aubrey Moore, and Romanes.

Let us concede that, judging by one sort of evidence alone (*i.e.* demonstration) there is nothing to prove that Christianity is true: may there not be other lines of evidence (*i.e.* moral) which step into the gap in favour of Christianity? I agree with Romanes in thinking this is precisely the case.

Again, in estimating the probability of any detail of a system, it is necessary to bear in mind the whole of the system. *E.g.* if you tell me that A. B., after being dead, came to life again, I rightly question your statement with great caution: Who saw the event? Were they sure he was dead? etc. But if I am told that the Incarnate Son of God rose again the case is different; no analogy tells against it, because there is no analogy; there is no other Son of God, and I have no preliminary knowledge how such a Being would act. This is only what we habitually bear in mind in ordinary cases. If in an account of a savage island I suddenly came across the statement that a person had invented a machine by which people could converse though miles apart, I refuse to believe it; but all the difficulty disappears when I find that a binder's blunder has put into the middle of the volume of travels a few pages from the life of Edison.

Now let us turn these thoughts to practical account in trying to answer the question whether it is our duty to read sceptical books. If one were constantly in the habit of reading Answers to Huxley or Replies to Spencer, without ever reading Huxley and Spencer themselves, there would be a certain degree of unfairness; though I think it would be mitigated by the fact of which you speak, that one cannot read the

current literature, or join in ordinary conversation, without hearing and reading objections to Christianity which at least make you know as much of Huxley, etc., as the ordinary sceptic knows of Christianity. But I do not think the same objection applies to the reading of such books as Mozley's, Gore's, Wilberforce on the Incarnation, Westcott, Maurice, etc. These men, men of candour and intelligence, believe that they have evidence for the Christian religion—evidence which is not demonstrative indeed, but moral. What they thus believe they try to expound, using careful language, avoiding erroneous statements. By reading them one comes at least to know what the Christian religion really is, how the parts of it are related to each other. Could one not do this in very sincere humility, owning one's self morally incapable as yet of fully appreciating the moral evidence to the Gospel?

If Christianity has a presumption in its favour—and I have tried to show that it has such a presumption from its long continuance, its extension, its success, the number of noble men who confess it, and the fact that no other religion can compete with it in these respects—should we not be foolhardy if we risked the loss of it by reading those who, though they cannot refute it, yet reject it because they do not find sufficient evidence, of their own sort, for it?

And we should remember that it is always more ready to attack than to offer to defend. A sharp intellect will readily pick out weak spots, real or supposed, in any case; to refute such criticism requires a patient weighing of the evidence, *e.g.* Niebuhr easily showed how defective was the evidence or the early history of Rome, and accordingly rejected it

all. Later historians have shown how much truth lay hid in the popular traditions which Livy used.

I should therefore advise you, for the present, not to read, unnecessarily, books which attack the Christian religion, nor yet those which refute such attacks, but rather books (I have mentioned the authors of some of them) which explain and commend the Christian faith, and show its coherence with itself and with the contents of human thought.

It is not a paradox to say that when a man has learned fully to believe, he is at last competent to read the books of unbelievers.

It is no more wrong to read with a hope that Christianity will be found credible than it is to read a bundle of my father's letters in the hope that they will confirm my veneration for him. If it be so, we have gained immensely by retaining and strengthening our faith; if it be otherwise, we must no doubt obey truth, but at what a loss! There is no other Father—no other religion—to take the place of that which will have been dethroned.

THE MORAL TEST OF FAITH

Don't you think that we are now in a transitional position with respect to faith and the assurance of it? A generation or two back people meant by faith the persuasion that we should not be punished for our sins, and it was expected that every person should feel this distinctly. He who did not feel it was assumed not to have it. Now we have learned that the work of our Lord is to save us, not from punishment, but from sin, and that faith is not the conviction of immunity but the living relation to our Lord, who is

able to make us good. But then we have to answer the question how far we may expect to have the experience of this. Clearly the experience is not co-extensive with the possession. We may have health to a great extent without being conscious of it. Especially when we are only convalescent, we may often be in better health when we feel ourselves most wretched. Yet we cannot afford entirely to disregard the experience. It does seem to belong to health to feel healthy. So we get perplexed.

As a help in the perplexity, I would suggest that the only satisfactory index of health is the work we are able to do. If a man who has been sick finds that he can now walk ten miles, he is reasonably satisfied that health is returning to him. And if we can, with all modesty, feel that we can do good things, such as banishing bad thoughts, acting unselfishly, curbing temper, better than we did (say) ten years ago, then we have reason to believe that God's grace is helping us.

To inquire too carefully as to our possession of faith is like giving our attention to our tools rather than to the work we are to do with them. If I made this box well, it shows that I had tools good enough for the purpose, even though I may desire to have still better tools, and in time may hope to procure them. If you have faith enough to do a good work, I think it is your duty to acknowledge that you did have some degree of faith in God, though you may rightly endeavour to have a better faith.

You see I put the main stress upon the moral proof of the possession of faith. I should do the same thing on a wider scale. It is, I believe, the Christian faith which has made the saint and changed the ideals of moral life in Europe. It may very well

happen that we are unable to answer intellectually all the difficulties which meet us. The fact that most Christians have been in great intellectual darkness, and have differed among themselves as to what is true, far from being an argument against the Christian religion, really shows how mighty it is, since in spite of this drawback it has done such great things.

I think, then, that it is our wisdom not to inquire very carefully whether we believe in this or that Christian mystery, but rather to try whether we cannot by the help of it overcome this or that moral difficulty. *E.g.* not to inquire whether we can appropriate all the teaching of the Church as to the Blessed Sacrament, but to see whether we cannot be more unselfish and Christ-like after our Communions. Not that I disparage the clothing of faith in proper language, for I believe intensely in the duty of glorifying God with our minds; but, at all events at a certain stage, the proof of faith is not what we think or feel about it, but what work we can do with it. And this work is necessarily very imperfect, as all our present life is. But if the power and the remembrance of my last Communion led me to be less irritable, I think that so far I had faith, *i.e.* a living trust in Christ who came to make me loving.

So go on with your good works, and strive to make them better; and when the question arises whether you have faith, put it aside as an intellectual question, which is most likely to perplex you, and try to answer it as a moral question, but testing what your faith enables you to do. To go back to my former illustration, health may be returning to the convalescent when he feels most prostrate. The wise doctor will not ask, "How do you feel to-day?" but "Have you been able to walk to-day?"

TO A TEACHER

I dare say most of the teaching will be concerned with our Lord's simpler acts and words. It would not be suitable to try to teach rough girls more than the simplest truths. But whatever one teaches, one should teach not as one's own acquisition of truth, but as being a part of a kingdom of truth of which the teacher is a humble subject. It is not "Believe this, for I believe it," but "Believe this, for it is true." We are often beguiled into putting our own consciousness of a truth into the place of the truth itself. This is, I believe, the case in all sorts of subjects. In religion we are specially liable to this error. I do not think it is wise to be always taking stock of one's acquirements of faith: this I believe, that I reject, the other thing I partially grasp. There must, of course, be a certain amount of such self-analysis, but (as is the case with all self-examination) it has to be kept rigidly in check, else it makes us centred in self rather than in God. I think that if we wish to believe, we do believe much more than we may fancy; for we cannot care enough for a truth to wish to possess it, unless we do indeed already in a certain sense possess it. (I wish to understand Plato, because I already do understand something of him; but I don't care a rap to understand Confucius because, perhaps ignorantly, I never saw anything worth understanding in him.) Christian belief is, I think, like other Christian virtues, more possessed at present *in via*, as they say, than *in veritate* or *in vita*; i.e. it is a thing which we are rather acquiring than possessing: it is "I believe; help my unbelief." If a person is wanting to believe he seems to me to be discerning, however dimly through

the fog, the worthiness of that which he is seeking for.

I think many of the difficulties in detail about Christian belief really come from our looking at things in detail. There are many things incredible in isolation which are credible enough in the right place.

Show a savage a diphtheria microbe, and tell him that a few of those little creatures imbibed will fill the blood with fire, choke the throat with a mass of leather, and kill the strongest man, and he will laugh at you. So many medical men laughed fifty years ago. And this microbe has taken up its place in the context of the germ-theory of disease, and no one doubts it or its power.

Suppose we were told that a Mr. Smith had turned water into wine, we should refuse to believe, or at least suspend our judgment. But when the same act is affirmed of One Who, though a Jewish peasant, has changed the face of Europe and has been worshipped by so many of the best of men as their Lord God, the case is evidently different. *If* He is what Christians believe, then the act is not improbable. The point where evidence requires to be specially strong is, not that the event of Cana took place, but that the Person who did it was what Christians believe. When Huxley and others assert that the evidence of the Gospels to the miracles is not first-rate, they ignore the point that the evidence of Christ's Godhead comes first, and must (as Illingworth points out) be more or less of a moral character. We do not believe in Christ because of the insuperable evidence to the miracle, but we believe in the miracle because of the convincing evidence to Christ's Godhead.

The same consideration applies to such points as

the Angels' Message or the Descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove. They are only unlikely if one forgets who the Person is with whom they are associated.

It does not seem to me that the probability of the Incarnation, etc., is at all affected by the discovery of other and sister worlds. If they have inhabitants, as they probably have, we have not the slightest clue to their capacity or needs. We know that men with lungs could not live in the moon, or men with muscles like ours move on Jupiter. So we do not know whether the supposed inhabitants of Sirius need redemption, or whether, if so, it is accomplished by the like process which procures salvation on earth. All we know is that, if experience shows us God's mercy on earth, we have a reason for believing that He is merciful to the inhabitants of other stars according to their needs.

Do you not confuse the Catholic doctrine that our salvation is in Christ alone with the assumption that only those are saved by Christ who know Him? The old Alexandrians at least looked at the Incarnation as a recreation of the human race of which the effect goes far beyond our consciousness of the Incarnation. They believed that it had restored to man at large the Divine Life which had been obscured but not annihilated by the fall. They believed that the virtue of Socrates and that of Abraham and that of St. Paul all sprang from the same root—Christ in us, though only one of them knew Christ by name: Abraham looked dimly forward to Him; and Socrates, though he did not know that God is in man, yet acted by that truth. I suppose that a virtuous savage is good not by any virtue of his own, but because man as a whole is united to God, and therefore God's life works in him. The Incarnation is not one out of many relations

between God and man, but the fundamental relation. The advantage which Christians have over heathens is not that they alone are saved by Christ, the others being left to strive unhelped, but that Christians know the power by which God is saving all men, and know the sort of conduct in which salvation consists, and can consciously co-operate in the work of grace which in others is more or less unconscious.

When you appeal to your girls to be truthful, you appeal to something divine in them which approves truth, however much they have practised falsehood. This is, I believe, Christ in them; and that which most effectually appeals to this inner life and makes it to act, is the history of the chief martyrs for truth's sake.

I quite think you will be able to help your girls by showing them the life of Christ; and, as those who give are themselves enriched, I expect you will be rewarded for your work of love by a growing faith. You will find it, as I have done, a great help in dealing with perplexed people to have passed through the perplexity yourself.

I should, if I were you, take a Gospel, piece by piece, study it beforehand, try to find how each passage may have an effect on your own life, and try to impress it on others. *E.g.* suppose you are reading St. Matt. viii., verses 2-4 suggest that I should not keep aloof from wicked people ("keep myself to myself," as they say), but try to help them. "Can't you get some friend to give up a dangerous habit?"

Verses 5-14. Palsy = helplessness. Some have so weakened their wills that they can't make an effort. "Can't you help them? *e.g.* by praying for them, getting them to join a class or a temperance society."

Verses 14, 15. Fever = restlessness. "Are you sometimes frightened at death and yet not trying to do better? Do something. Give up such a fault. Break a bad companionship. Join a *Confirmation* class. Try to *minister* to Him."

I think the Bible itself is its best exposition. Yet a commentary may suggest thoughts. Give a little explanation of the more remote allusions; *e.g.* tell them what sort of disease leprosy is. But don't let the class become a lecture on the geography and antiquities of Palestine, like Farrar.

Your girls will not take in much instruction about foreign ways and places; but they have consciences, and it is your office to appeal to them. Don't be afraid of familiar illustrations. You will touch them more by a story about two girls quarrelling over a hat than by one of two kings quarrelling over a country. I don't see why one should be afraid of making them laugh a little: humour is a gift to the northern nations. One can often make an impression by raising a smile, and then suddenly taking a very solemn tone and impressing some truth. Remember how Shakespeare enhances the horror of Duncan's death by the buffoonery of the porter. Of course this wants care, but I think it is often better than unrelieved solemnity. Make your teaching as concrete as possible: they have little power of abstraction. Don't say, "Servants should tell the truth to their mistresses," but make up a little story of Jane who stole the spoon and told a lie, and could not pray and got harder; while Mary, who confessed, got rid of the spoon out of her box and of the burden from her mind. Tell them at times that you make up the stories; and use as far as possible names which are not found in the class. Otherwise when they go out

they will say, "I say, Jane Smith, where's the spoon?"

THE GOOD LIFE OF NON-BELIEVERS

Altruism and Morality

It is to me a most comforting thing to find a man leading a Christian life though he has not a Christian belief. It shows that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ extends to many who do not confess His faith; for as I am sure that there is no good thing in you or me which does not come from Christ, so I am sure that the many good things which one sees in such persons as X. come from the same Source. They are like persons who breathe the air and live in it, though they have never realised what the air is and how it supports life. I cannot doubt that the world to come is the school that such persons need, and that, arrived there, they will welcome the light, and worship Him whom they have already followed. So our prayers will have good warrant when we ask for him light, and, in that light, peace. I do not believe that there is any other than our Lord by whom we can be saved from sin, but I am sure that He saves many who do not recognise Him, and who, when they see Him more clearly, will be the first to love Him.

It may well be one of the gains of death that, as it removes us from a world to which we have grown accustomed, it may start us with greater freedom in the world to come. In the perplexity with which one will start afresh in a life so different from that which is left, may come some revival of the childlike mind and its susceptibility to new impressions.

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

I will try to tell you what I know of the mystery of our Lord's Temptation. And, first, it is certainly the Catholic Faith that our Lord was unable to sin. If we confess that He is very God, we cannot dream of Him in opposition to the Father. To do so would be to divide the One Godhead, for we should have a God the Father who is incapable of sin, and a second God, the Son who is capable of sin.

How, then, was our Lord capable of real temptation? Consider how we are generally tempted. That which attracts us is not sin, but some good and desirable thing which the tempter puts before us to attract us. If a poor man is tempted to steal, that which attracts him is not stealing, but the natural and innocent desire for food, which in many ways he might gratify rightly, only under certain circumstances he can only gratify it at the cost of sin.

Our Lord felt as we should the desire for food, and was as strongly attracted as we should be by the prospect of bread instead of stones. Only, He realised, as we might not, that to make stones into bread would be, in His case, disobedience, and He refused. But He was tempted as truly as we might be, because He felt as we the craving for food.

To trust Himself to God's promised angels was a temptation on a higher plane. He felt the desire to glorify the Father by giving Him an opportunity of showing His faithfulness. It was such a temptation as a faithful priest might often feel, who does not shrink from infection because he trusts God to protect him, yet might be led by pride to neglect due precautions. Our Lord saw that even trust is not

free from possibilities of sin ; and strongly as he felt the desire to display His Father's trustworthiness, He would not do so at the cost of presumption.

The glorious world which He beheld was the world which He had come to win. There was nothing in it which might not be redeemed to worthy service. Kingship might be used for just government, popularity for holy influence, wealth for the relief of poverty. He desired them all ; but would not have them at the cost proposed.

Now in all this our Lord was tempted just as we are. He did want food, and an occasion of glorifying His Father, and the wealth of the world, just as we might. He did not come into this world to live an unreal and inhuman life, caring nothing for the things which God has prepared for the use of men. He was as truly tempted as I was the other day, when I saw an expensive book which would have helped me much in my work, and which I greatly desired ; but which I would not buy, because if I had bought it I could not have paid my grocer. My temptation was not to cheat the grocer but to possess a desirable book ; and our Lord's temptation was not to disobey God, or to presume upon His goodness, or to worship Satan, but to possess various things, all good and desirable in themselves, but which He could not obtain save at the cost of sin. His temptation lay in His real susceptibility to the goodness and the desirability of these things, if only they could be procured without sin.

So He sets us an example for Lent. The food, the amusements which we give up are not bad things : they are in themselves innocent and good. Lent is not needed to bid us give up gluttony or vicious plays, for those the Christian gives up every day. But Lent

says that the Tempter makes use of good and innocent things to beguile us into neglect of God; and we give them up not because they are bad, but because their goodness has been perverted into a snare.

I hope I have said enough to enable you to think rightly of our Lord's real temptation as compatible with perfect and necessary sinlessness. Some one sums up the difference between Him and ourselves thus: We can sin, our Lord cannot sin. That after all our thought on the subject there should remain some points which are not clear is natural enough. *Omne exit in mysterium*, according to the old saying. But I believe that in this and in other cases the residuum of the unexplained is less for those who accept the Catholic Faith than for those who reject it.

OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION AND OURS

I think you are confusing two things—temptation, and the temper in which it is met. Let us take the simplest case of our Lord's Temptation—that of providing Himself with bread. I conceive that He felt the desire for food no less keenly than does a starving beggar; and also that the desire was not in itself wicked, but natural, and one which at suitable times He would rightly satisfy: only, at that particular time He could not satisfy it without impatience. So far, He and the beggar are precisely on the same plane: they are equally tempted by a desire, which He cannot satisfy without impatience nor the beggar without theft.

Then comes in a difference. Our Lord meets the temptation with a perfect resolution to do the Father's Will, and with a perfect conviction that that Will is for His real good. The beggar meets it with only a

partial desire to do what is right, and only a partial confidence in God's faithfulness; that is to say, he meets the temptation with a will which is deficient in love and in faith. The temptation (attraction to food) is identical in the two cases, but the character which is exposed to it is different. Our Lord is tempted just as the beggar, but a difference comes in as to the temper in which the temptation is borne.

Now suppose there are two beggars, equally famished, but one of them is a devout man who is accustomed to seek God's Will, while the other has never thought about it. The temptation is alike to both, but the one brings to it a temper very different from the other, and is better able to resist it. But suppose the good man fails to retain his faith and love, then he is less able to resist, though the temptation itself is no other than it was.

Suppose we meet a temptation with a doubt whether God is not allowing us to be tempted above that we are able—whether it is really possible for us to overcome, whether the painful and prolonged effort to resist is worth while; then we are meeting the temptation with a temper which is deficient in love and faith, because we do not care very much to overcome, and do not believe very much that God is willing to give us the victory. The temptation (= attraction) remains the same, but we meet it with less vigour. I believe that our Lord is tempted like as we are—*i.e.* that the attraction is the same to Him and to us; but I do not suppose that He who is tempted is of the same temper. In our case the equal temptation appeals to a depraved will.

Our Lord knew that He could not sin, because He was begotten of the Father. But ought not we to have the like conviction? Are we not children of

God, and ought we not to believe that God will not fail us, and that He will provide sufficient grace? When we say, "I will overcome if I can, but I doubt whether it will be possible," are we not nourishing the actual sin of unbelief? This, of course, our Lord did not; nor ought we to do so.

Might not the one of the beggars say to the other, "I am just as hungry as you, and long for that loaf no less; but I will not give way to the temptation because I know that theft is wicked, and that God will not fail me; and that He will enable me to starve rather than offend Him"?

It seems to me that our Lord's temptation was enhanced by His ability to escape it. It would be more painful for the beggar to resist the temptation to steal if the baker turned his back. Our Lord not only longed for bread, but could have easily procured it; only He knew that under the circumstances it was His duty to starve; and He must have required a more determined resolution to be obedient than if bread had been impossible.

He was sure, indeed, of final victory; but have we not the same reason for the same confidence? Can we suppose that the defeat of God will be the end of His work? If He desires me to be gentle, can we imagine that the end of His work will be to leave me cross? To dream of the endless persistence of sin is, I think, to allow unbelief.

To look for the ultimate subjugation of ourselves to God does indeed require patience. We shall have to struggle long before we have become gentle. But is it not the same with our Lord? He came not only to be good, but to teach us to be good; and this must require long patience when, generation after generation, He finds us wicked still. The end of His

temptation is not when He rebuffed the tempter in the wilderness, but when He has made His members entirely holy. Meanwhile we may learn from Him that the right way is to meet each temptation as it comes without looking much at the distant future. The beggar should say, "I am hungry to-day, but I will not steal"; and he will be losing faith if he allows himself to say, "If I abstain from theft to-day, I shall be just as hungry to-morrow, and then perhaps I shall not be able to resist." If he resists to-day he will be more fit to resist to-morrow. So, if I refuse to be cross with A., I shall be more able to keep my temper with the more provoking B. I must not suffer the possible temptation of next year to make me slack in meeting the actual temptation of to-day.

To sum up, then. Temptation is not the direct solicitation of evil, to do evil for evil's sake; but it is the solicitation to do what is innocent in itself, but which cannot be gratified under the circumstances save by disobedience. It is right to desire food, to desire wealth and power, to desire an exhibition of God's faithfulness to His promise; but it would have been wrong to gratify hunger at the cost of impatience, to seek wealth by worshipping Satan, to seek God's protection by presumption. Our Lord felt the three temptations, or attractions, no less than we; but He opposed to them a will which was formed by perfect love for His Father and perfect confidence in Him. We bring to similar temptations a will which is depraved by lack of love and lack of faith. But these sins are themselves defects which we ought not to entertain. We also ought to love God supremely and to believe in His Will and power to strengthen us. Our temptations are like His; but we must confess that we bring to the temptation a character very

unlike His; yet that He came to re-fashion us to be like Him, giving us the faith and love which would render our temptations, like His, impotent to seduce us. And we must remember that to meet temptation in a temper of indifference or of distrust is itself an evidence of sin against which we must pray.

As regards ourselves, it is quite true that freedom of will is inconceivable unless we have a power of choosing between right and wrong; but that is because we are actually in sin, and cannot attain to true freedom unless we repudiate it. But the freedom of God has no such limitation, because there is no sin in Him which He needs to repudiate. He is good, not mechanically (as if He were good because He cannot be otherwise, as a perfect clock keeps time because there is nothing in its construction to make it gain or lose), but voluntarily, because He loves what is good and therefore fulfils it. It is so with our Lord: there is no sin in Him to be repudiated, and His freedom consists not in avoiding a possible evil, but in loving the good not mechanically but voluntarily. It will be so with us when we have learned that the service of God is perfect freedom; and in a measure our experience shows us that we are moving in this direction. Suppose a drunkard: his freedom at first must take the form of choosing sobriety and repudiating drunkenness. But after many years the passion of drink has been perfectly repressed in him, and he is no longer tempted by the bottle. But he is sober now, not because he resists a temptation which has ceased to exist, nor yet because he is mechanically constrained to be sober as a lion is incapable of eating straw, but because he has a perfect love of sobriety.

NEW TRUTHS IN THEOLOGY

I cannot agree with X. that what is new in theology is necessarily not true. If it contradicts what is the old faith, then of course it is self-condemned in the eyes of all Catholics. But I believe that theology is as much a speculative science in the nineteenth century as in the fifth; that every age presents to it new problems to be solved; and that the decisions of the past are starting-points for the investigation of the problems of the present.

No one would put Mr. X.'s speculations, or those of any modern writer, on the same level of certainty with the decisions of the Creeds; because those decisions are not the opinions of individual thinkers, but the primitive tradition summed up and co-ordinated by the inspired Church. But (except on the score of inferior intellectual power) I do not see why his speculations are not as likely to be right as those of St. Augustine and St. Athanasius. Both of these theologians had to search Christian Truth to find the solution of new problems; and X., I believe, does the same thing.

There are several questions which are now of the most pressing importance, but which in earlier days received little investigation and no definition: I may instance the nature of the Church, the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, the future of the wicked, and the Kenosis of our Lord. If theology is to be something more than a constant restatement of old dogmas, if it is to be a living and growing science, it must consider such questions as these.

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH AND PRIVATE JUDGMENT

Briefly, I should say that God alone is infallible; that He made man responsive to the truth; that when sin had dulled our capacity, He revived it by regeneration; that the Body of the regenerate (the Church) has in a fuller sense than any individual this sensitiveness to the truth; that if she corporately recognises a doctrine as true, her judgment is indefinitely more likely to be correct than the judgment in the other direction of any individual, and that therefore humility commands us to accept such corporate judgment; but that the only ground of certainty is in the individual consciousness, regenerated, submitted to the Body, yet seeking to know God. "That which we have seen . . . declare we . . . that ye may have fellowship with us . . . our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Certainty, in other words, lies in faith in God; and faith cannot come without humility. The proud man (heretic, choosing for himself) "knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF IMMORTALITY

I cannot but feel that the account of E. is a grave one. But how little can we know of these matters; while we are sure that it is God only Who holds any one of us in health, and is no less our support in decay. These thoughts have been much in my mind lately, because I have been studying the Psalms for Bible-readings at Bordighera. How strange it seems that the Psalmist was able to look so confidently to rescue from his enemies, because if God did not rescue

him in this world, there was no clear hope of another world in which He could vindicate Himself! It was "Save me now or never." Yet a very little experience must have shown him that in many cases the saint is not delivered in this world; and indeed that, so far as this world is concerned, the life even of the holiest goes down often among clouds of pain and distress. This shows me how excellent it was that, whatever Israel learned in Egypt, they did not learn the Egyptian expectation of the persistence of the dead. It is not because there is anything indestructible in man that they were to learn to look forward to a future life, but because they had been trained in faith in God; and when painful experience and disappointment had taught them that in this world hope is not justified, they were driven to knock at the door of the grave, and find that God, if He be God, must have His way of vindicating Himself there. That is, I think, why the New Testament never uses the Platonic phrase of an "immortal soul." It is not because we have anything indestructible in ourselves that we look for a future life, but because we look to God, Who holds us in life. The Athenians thought St. Paul was preaching a new god and goddess, "Jesus and Resurrection;" whereas he really preached "through Jesus the Resurrection."

Do you not think there may be something of the same sort of being driven to an impasse, in order that an unexpected way be discovered, in the sense of which you speak of one's personality becoming a point that demands to be a centre? May it not be that the real solution may be found, not in becoming less personal, less central, but in discovering that personality consists in unity with God, and thus in occupying the real Centre? I can hardly get a

glimpse of this, far less express it, but perhaps the ultimate solution will be found, not in any Old Testament "thou shalt not," but in the Gospel "I am."

INVOCATION OF SAINTS

Doubtless the saints pray for us. If Dives prays for his brethren, much more would a saint. They form a "cloud of witnesses," watching our struggles.

But do they hear us when we invite their prayers? We are left merely to conjecture, for Holy Scripture says nothing about the matter. It seems to me that it is rash to assume that they do. Perhaps they know so much more about us and our real needs that there is no need of our asking them to pray for us. We ask the prayers of a holy man on earth because he does not know our need unless we ask him, and because he might forget us. Perhaps the departed saints know our need better than we do, and are in no need of a stimulus to pray for us. It seems to me, then, in the absence of direct authority, rash to say to St. Peter, "Pray for me." At the same time it would be presumptuous to condemn what the greater part of Christendom has practised. I would rather say, "I dare not condemn those who say 'Blessed Virgin, pray for me;' yet I should feel it rash to say so myself."

There is, of course, no derogation of the glory of God in asking a departed (any more than an earthly) saint to pray for me. But in practice it is found that people do not easily stop at asking prayers of the saints: they ask for their help and protection, and sometimes seem to regard them as sources of grace, even perhaps more accessible than God Himself.

Practically in Italy at the present time I fancy (knowing the country well) that hardly any one in private prayer addresses the Almighty Father, not many our Lord Jesus Christ, practically no one the Holy Spirit; but that prayers are usually addressed to the Blessed Virgin and other saints. I do not say that this is the authorised practice, but that it prevails among devout persons of moderate education. I think it is a great evil, and that it is against such prayers as these that one of our Articles speaks. And although there is a vast difference between such prayers and "Pray for me," yet I fear there is a great tendency to slide from one into the other. So I think it myself safest to abstain from even "Pray for me," not condemning it as wrong, but distrusting myself as likely to pervert it; there being no direct authority in Holy Scripture, and the Church not having adopted such prayers in her earliest ages.

Holy Scripture speaks of the blessed dead being in peace, but it also speaks of a fire trying every man's work, and salting every sacrifice. We shall probably die with many faults clinging to us, which will have to be cleaned off by penitence before we are fit for our perfect consummation and bliss. I cannot but think that there will be much shame and grief in our retrospect in Paradise, where our "works follow us." Brought closer to God, we shall hate our sins and grieve over them as we never did on earth. But such grief is surely a blessed and healing thing. Who would wish to escape from it? Dante asks the spirits in purgatorial flames what keeps them there, and they answer that it is their own will to remain and be cleansed.

Even here penitence has an awful joy of its own: much more when we know more of God. I think our

article condemns the thought of the souls of holy men being in misery : that they are growing in joy through the cleansing of penitential sorrow seems to me the constant teaching of the whole Church, and it is the teaching even of the best Roman doctors, such as Cardinal Newman in "The Dream of Gerontius."

I suppose holy water is the relic of the fountain which used to stand in the *atrium* or courtyard of churches, at which people washed their hands and faces before worship (Heb. x. 22), as Mahomedans do still. So it would symbolise what we pray, "Cleanse us, O Lord, and keep us undefiled, that we may be numbered among the blessed ones who serve Thee day and night at Thine altar."

THE SAME SUBJECT

With regard to the Communion of Saints, I cannot but think it is a great guess that the departed can hear our appeals. May it not be part of the needful discipline of death that the silence is as great on their side as on ours? only on their side they hear in it, I hope, more clearly the Voice of God than we do among our toils. We have been so used to fancying that the real bond between saint and saint is proximity of space and association in speech and work, that it may be necessary for those things (good as they are) to be suspended in order that the real Bond—the common life in the One Lord—may be appreciated. Your sister in India is not the less united to you because she does not see you, and cannot hear your longing to question her; you and she are thrown back upon the more real but less obvious ties of love and faith.

And there is the additional danger in invoking

the departed, that we cannot practically do so in the same mental attitude in which we address saints on earth. If I ask a saint on earth to pray for me, I do so with great humility indeed, but in a way as an equal: I sit by his side, as I explain my needs; I fancy he does not quite understand them, and discuss the bearings of them. But if I ask St. Ambrose to pray for me, I put myself mentally, and probably physically, in the attitude of prayer which I assume in speaking to God; I kneel. I am not over-anxious to state my case with precision, because I feel confident that he will understand my need however ill expressed. There is, of course, no worship of other gods in asking either the earthly saint or St. Ambrose for prayers, but I cannot help fearing that the circumstances in the latter case put people into the attitude in which the worship of other gods is probable. The theological distinction, too, between "latria" and "dulia" may be ever so precise and accurate, but in prayers we are not engaged in rigid self-criticism, eyeing ourselves to see whether we are doing the thing rightly. Rather it is our desire to forget self in the Presence of Him to Whom we pray. Is it likely that an eager, praying person should weigh accurately the amount, or test accurately the sort, of devotion which he pays to the person whom he addresses? Here comes in what you say about the possibility of a very holy person using prayer to the saints with safety, while it would be dangerous to those of less spirituality. I dare say a very holy person may have such a specialised love of God that nothing is likely to rival God in his thoughts, just as a devoted wife may love a thousand people without any risk of her love for them rivalling her love for her husband, which is a thing quite distinct. But

how few there are, probably, who have such a supreme love of God! In the absence of it, I should think most people would love the saints best, as most like themselves. And considering the inveterate tendency of man to shrink from God and to worship the creature more than the Creator, it seems to me horribly dangerous to encourage people in devotions to the Saints with no more than a theoretical and difficult and (to many people) unpractical distinction between the sort of devotion which is due to God alone, and the sort which may be paid to the Saints. Yet I have never heard in a Roman sermon, nor ever, I think, read in a Roman book, any warning of the danger which must surely exist.

Then, again, devotion to the Saints, as it is practised, seems to me to embody a political idea which we have outgrown. It was natural in the Middle Ages to think of God as a King surrounded by courtiers, so that to reach His ear we must make friends with His favourites. No doubt there is a truth in this, else Holy Scripture would not so frequently use regal language about God; but the prevalent language of the New Testament seems to me to be rather parental, as of a Father to Whom the children have immediate access. If an earthly father found his children shrinking from him, and putting their better brothers and sisters between themselves and him, I think he would consider there was some defect in their understanding of him and their relation to him.

I do not think that we, as individuals, have a right to censure those who invoke the Saints. The custom has been widely spread for many centuries. Nor do I hesitate to say "Ora pro nobis;" not in the sense of assuming that the Saint knows my

particular need at the moment, but as claiming my share in the universal intercession of the Church. But I confess that I feel very grave scruples about any more detailed request for their prayers ; and am very thankful for our position in the English Church, where we are not forbidden to use such petitions, and yet they are not authorised by use in public prayer.

UNCTION OF THE SICK

I am afraid I cannot give much of an answer to your question. The history of unction of the sick is perhaps given best in Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities." As far as I can recall the matter without books, there is singularly little (practically no) reference to unction in the early ages (say to A.D. 500) as an ecclesiastical ordinance ; but on the other hand there are many cases of unction conferred by laymen with the purpose of cure ; the oil apparently not consecrated, but either common oil or oil from the lamps burned in certain sacred places. At the same time it is almost inconceivable that the unction by priests with solemn prayers commended by St. James should not have been practised ; so that the probable conclusion is not that it was not common, but that the record of early customs is very incomplete. I think that there can be no doubt that bodily recovery is the specific purpose, and that unction was administered for many centuries at the beginning of any serious illness, not (as is usually the custom in the Roman Church now) when recovery is almost hopeless. "Extreme" does not mean *in extremis*, but the "last unction," *i.e.* subsequent to the unction in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. Some devout Roman Catholic writers urge a return to the

earlier use, but with little success. Those who look chiefly at spiritual benefits find it difficult to assign a specific grace to this Sacrament; how is this "forgiveness" different from that in Penance? I have never read a scholastic book on the subject which has satisfied me. I have twice used Holy Unction in cases of very grave but not hopeless illness. In both cases with the result of bodily recovery; and I know of many other cases. I blessed the oil myself, as our bishops do not do so (though some bishops do), and used the form in the first Prayer-book of Edward the VIth. In the East the oil is blessed by seven priests, so that episcopal benediction is not regarded as essential.

FAITH AND ITS (GROWTH) THROUGH DIFFICULTIES

Have you seen Miss Caillard's delightful book "Use of Science to Christians"? It is just the sort of book to give people who are afraid of thinking lest they should lose their faith. This distrust of thought is, I think, one of the most painful errors of the day. People will not consider that God has made us that we may know Him; and so some are satisfied with feeling without faith; and some misrepresent faith as accepting a truth on the testimony of another. This seems to lie at the root of the craving of so many for a book or a Church which will infallibly decide all doubts. But what if God means that we should grow in religion, as in other knowledge, by means of doubts resolutely and humbly met? This distrust of man's faculty for knowing God seems to me the plausible way of putting a distrust of God's will to

reveal Himself, and so to be really agnostic. I am distressed by the agnostic grounds which a friend has lately given me for submission to Rome.

RELATIONS WITH SECEDERS TO ROME

I hardly know what to say about relations with those who have left the Anglican Communion for the Church of Rome. Of course if a person is really and seriously convinced, after such reflection as his capacity allows, that the one is, and the other is not, the Society which God has founded, he has no choice—he must act accordingly. But in the case of a person whom one has known in a way deeper than mere social intercourse, I should find a greater barrier between us, though I could not blame him. However conscientiously, I should feel that he had deserted the post where God placed him—that he is denying Sacraments which to my mind are Divine. My experience of people who have taken that step is not very favourable. Most of those whom I have known have seceded because they saw the evils of our position—which I also see grievously—and have thought that because we are wrong, Rome is right; closing their eyes to the great evils of Rome—as great as ours, though in a different direction. Some have done so merely because they preferred Rome; and some because they thought they could save their souls there. This is, I think, a selfish reason. We ought not to worry about saving our souls, but leave that to Him, Whose profession it is to be the Saviour. We have no right to ask whether we like this, or whether that will save us; but only what God would have us to do. Is it, or is it not, His Will that we should stand here or there? I do not for a moment

mean that there are not many people who ask this question ; only I have found many more asking the other questions, which seem to me selfish and therefore sure to mislead. If a person conscientiously says, " Christ did not found the English Church ; her bishops are not Christ's pastors ; her Sacraments are not Christ's ordinances ; " of course he must leave her, only it would put him a long way from me who believe just the contrary. If my acquaintance with him had been merely intellectual or social, I might not feel this a barrier, but how could I talk to him about my Communion when he has declared by his acts that I never made a Communion, or speak as a priest when he is bound to regard me as a layman ? Personally I should feel such conversation unreal, though I do not wish to make my feelings a rule for others. I know that some converts do not so entirely repudiate things Anglican, but allow that we may have Priests and Sacraments. It is for them to reconcile this opinion with the authority to which they have submitted. But I can hardly see how, in this case, they are justified in leaving the place where by their birth God placed them, and where, for many years perhaps, they conceived they were serving God. A person born in the Roman Church may naturally know little about us, and we cannot be surprised if they condemn us ; but the convert actually repudiates what he once thought, and what I think still, is the ordinance of God. Of course, in the application of principles there is need to consider a thousand subsidiary considerations ; but I do feel that it is our duty in some way to mark and avoid those who make divisions ; though the manner of doing so was very different in the Apostles' days from what it is now when the discipline of the whole Church is in disorder.

LIMITS TO DEFINITION IN DOCTRINE. BOOKS OF PRAYER

It is indeed an immense blessing to hear Mr. Jukes talk, even if one does not take in all he says. It is one of his theories (and I think Coleridge's too) that one apprehends much more by the understanding than one does by the intellect (to use Coleridge's terms): and I remember him saying how many people get help and comfort from such a text as "He is the propitiation for our sins," who would attach very different intellectual meanings to the words. This is, to my mind, one of the great advantages of the Church over the sects: she is inspired to give us sacramental phrases, when she often does not define intellectually, but which each Christian digests, and, as with the manna, each gets the food he needs. Whereas the sects either define their doctrine precisely (*e.g.* Calvinistic programme of election), or else leave both thought and form indefinite; the modern latitudinarian dissent: the consequence of which is that religion becomes individual, not Catholic, or else it ceases to invoke the intellect, and becomes merely emotional. I am sure it is significant that the Theological Evangelist uses for the Son, not the Platonic phrase, Idea, but the Neoplatonic, Word; for He is not only the Thought of God, but the Utterance of that Thought. In other words, He is form as well as Substance. Here, I think, we find the root of the sacramental system: God's mind is an expressed mind, objective to Himself: it is the express image, and therefore supplies what idolatry vaguely sought, and what the sacramental system provides.

I agree with most of what you say about the "Paradise." However sober on the whole, it is still foreign. But I doubt whether any book of prayers can or ought to provide more than suggestions: the work must be that of our own minds. We may be stimulated by reading how saints have prayed, or guided to pray for what we might have forgotten; but the prayer must be our own. But sometimes, in seasons of dryness or wandering thoughts, it may be a help to use a book. It should be a crutch for a man regaining the use of his limbs: it is not a third leg. There are, I think, very few books of devotion before the Reformation. Books, of course, were scarce and dear before printing; and most of the early books of private prayers were short, and had little more than the Lord's Prayer, the Penitential Psalms, etc. Moreover, the Middle Ages were times of so much liberty of thought and individuality that men were not very likely to provide books of prayer for large bodies of men. It was St. Ignatius Loyola who made all his disciples pray in the same form (in the Manresa) and set the fashion of elaborate books of prayers. Of course there are many earlier practical treatises on prayer, but not, I believe, many books of prayers. I suspect nothing would be better than to make a book one's self on the model of Bishop Andrewes, only perhaps borrowing words from other books besides Holy Scripture. Such a book ought perhaps to have many blank pages in it for correction and additions, so as to grow with our growth. I neither could nor would write a book of prayers. Nobody but a saint could do it well, and perhaps he had better not.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR COMMON
CHRISTIANITY

It seems to me that the lesson which is being pressed upon our age is the fundamental advantage which all those have who accept the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot think that one Christian body is as good as another, or that it matters little or nothing whether we hold this or that expression of faith, and possess this or that form of ministry. But while I hold strongly that the Catholic Creed and the Apostolic Ministry are gifts which we are bound to uphold, I think that we are being taught a complementary truth, that even without these advantages we are bound to recognise the position which we have in common with all Christians. Thus I learn with delight the works of grace in Protestant societies, and would gladly join with them in prayer ; while I should feel bound to resist anything in the direction of syncretism. What you mention as the difficulty of sympathy at home in trifling matters, at the same time that you are more sensitive to sympathy in more directly spiritual matters, seems to me just the old difficulty of believing that the Lord is come in the flesh. It is comparatively easy to grasp a spiritual religion—a religion which has to do with a distant and ideal life ; but the hard thing is to recognise that the union of God with us extends to fleshly things—to eating and drinking. But difficulties are not to depress us, but rather to make our aim more definite.

BODY AND SPIRIT

The use of narrative, whether historical or fictional, as a means of teaching truth recalls one to the fundamental truth of the Incarnation, that it is by taking man's flesh that the Divine Word gains access to us. I do not mean that it is only in this way that the principle acts; for when Truth clothes itself in the abstract language of the philosopher, it is still the Divine clothed in the garment of human thought; but this is less obviously the case when the lesson is conveyed by acts and events. The body of man shows its true purpose when it is discerned as sacramental. This seems to be the hope of the Resurrection. Spirit seems to come in natural contact only with similar spirit. I cannot enter into a man's mind, or get him to enter into mine, if our only relation were spiritual. But the flesh brings into contact with that which is not congenial. By the flesh I hear the words and understand the mind of those who are spiritually far apart from me. Suppose ten men in a room: some of them, who have spiritual life, are united, though they know it not, in constant worship before the Throne; while others are far away in lusts and desires and thoughts which are purely carnal. Then they speak, and we are forced to know the words and desires of our godless neighbours. Too often the power is on the wrong side, and our minds are invaded and polluted by their evil minds. It would not be so if our spiritual life were stronger; for there are saints much more holy than we, who know wickedness deeper than we have learned, and yet are undefiled. I hope that in the Resurrection this arbitrary faculty of invading alien spiritual spheres through the flesh will be

restored, but to spirits invigorated by the purgation of death.

I am interested in what you say in one of your letters about a meeting for free discussion. It would be most useful if it could be managed; but it would require a chairman of much tact and decision and of some amount of learning. Did I ever tell you of the experience of F. D. Maurice? A young shoemaker called on him, saying that he was an unbeliever, as were most of his companions in a discussion society which met in Oxford Street; but they believed Maurice was an honest man, and would welcome him if he cared to attend their meetings. A friend of mine used to go with him, and has described the prophet's bearing. He was gradually put in place of president. He used to listen with the most reverent and genuine interest to the young men, and in summing up used to restate their arguments in a far better form than their own; and then in the most courteous way would examine them, lead the speakers to think out their notions, and thus lead them on. One evening James Hinton attended, but he got angry and sarcastic and scolded them. But how hard it would be to be a Maurice, and how hard to find one!

THE QUAKERS

I have a great love for the Quakers, and think that they are much nearer to catholicism than other protestants. This was also the opinion of Moehler. More reverence is shown to the Sacraments by regarding them as purely spiritual than by thinking them as ordinances of Christ, but destitute of Divine Life. I had some years ago a correspondence with a Quaker

at Croydon, who reprinted one of W. Law's works. He told me that he had printed a thousand copies of it when he was a young man, which were bought entirely by Quakers; and had now reprinted again a thousand copies, which had been sold chiefly among those whom he called High Churchmen. Several of my dearest friends are of Quaker descent, and there is a gentle gravity and self-control about them which one seldom sees elsewhere. The modern Quaker, who will have no ordinances, but goes to theatres and balls, and never sits still an hour, is to my mind a monster. Of the old sort there are still some survivors, but I am told by some of themselves that they are growing few. Did you ever read Leslie's "Snake in the Grass," an early book against Quakers? It is very clever, and the man (a non-juror) is perfectly orthodox; but I had when reading it a sensation which I have seldom had, as if there were an atmosphere of direct opposition to the Holy Spirit, so much so that I seemed conscious of the presence of evil spirits in the room, who made me quite afraid to stay in it until I had bidden them be ashamed. My dear old friend, Mr. Jukes, used to have a somewhat similar consciousness of the presence of distressed spirits, who came to him for prayer and instruction. You have read some of his books, and therefore will be interested to hear that he entered into rest on July 4. He taught me almost all I know about God.

MODES OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

I quite see your difficulty as to the relation between our Lord's constant presence and His presence in the Blessed Sacrament; and it is certainly a matter which one would like to see as clearly as it can

be seen under our present conditions. I should be inclined to say neither that our Lord is more truly present on one occasion than on another, nor yet that the difference rests merely upon our perceiving the presence more clearly on the one occasion than at other times, but that the sacramental presence is the device adopted by God's love to reach us and enable us to grasp His continual presence and live by it.

Perhaps we can look at the matter in the light of another truth. Does our Lord Jesus Christ love us more than the Father does, or do we receive from Him a saving grace which we do not receive from the Father? Surely not. It is the Father's love and grace which the Lord Jesus brings to us. But the Father sends His Son into the world to enable the world to know and receive the love of the Father; and in like manner He devises a sacramental mode of presence, not that our Lord is present there and not elsewhere, nor that we may be stimulated to discern Him there rather than elsewhere, but because God knows that such a mode or presence is necessary, in order that He may find us where we are in blindness and ignorance.

Take this illustration. It is your birthday, and your father gives you a special kiss and a present; not that he loves you more than he did yesterday and will to-morrow, nor only that you may have a keener sense of his constant love, but because he wants to find a special way of showing you his love.

Bishop Gore, in his "Body of Christ," has some excellent teaching, that our Lord's coming to us in the Holy Communion is not like a visit which lasts a few minutes and then passes away. He enters in that He may dwell with us. That is why the Prayer-book does not only tell us that we should "take This," but

also that we should take it away to "feed on Him by faith with thanksgiving." To put the matter in another way, our Communion is meant to be, not incidents apart from our daily life, but salient points in a life which is all communion with God in Christ.

I am not sure whether I have been able to put clearly what I want to say. I am sure you will find help in Maurice, and perhaps you would turn to the passage in Gore.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Your parallel from the Antigone is very striking. It seems to me that it is not the right way of looking at things to say that there are strange similarities here and there between Greek religion and the Christian, but rather that there is but one religion, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, who is the "Light that lighteth every man"; so that whatever truth there is in Greek or other pagan religion is really the same thing that in the Gospel is brought out into clear light. So I fully agree with that Article which declares that men are not saved each by his own religion, because in the Name of Jesus Christ alone is salvation; for I believe that whenever a heathen man is saved—*i.e.* is enabled to overcome his vices and to live a holy life, he is saved not by some religion of his own, but by the religion which is revealed in a measure to all men, though they may corrupt it, but which in its fulness is bestowed upon us. "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare we unto you." I know no salvation but from sin, *i.e.* the being made free from its power; and I cannot doubt that many heathen people are being saved when I see them becoming free from sin and living a noble life; but I do not believe that there is any power

in heaven or on earth which can give them this freedom but Jesus Christ, whom they worship without knowing Him.

I do not suppose that in the majority of cases we can attain to such a certain knowledge of the Will of God that we feel no longer the possibility of error. As Butler teaches, our ordinary rule is probability. But the like uncertainty encompasses us in everything. We cannot be sure that our senses are to be trusted, or that the conclusions we draw from their reports are just. The only things in which we are certain, are mathematical truths; and that, as Illingworth points out, is because mathematical axioms are concerned not with real things but with figments of the imagination. If anything were absolutely certain we should find all intelligent persons agreeing; and as a matter of observation we do not find them agreeing in any matter of observation or of theory. How different the same set of truths looks to a Radical and to a Conservative! I suppose this degree of uncertainty is good for us because it bids modesty, and because for the present it is far more important that we should be moving in the right direction than we should have reached the right end. Yet our position has this danger, that we should forget that truth, though we cannot absolutely reach it, is a thing which subsists apart from ourselves (is objective), and thus we should resolve truth itself, and not merely our grasp of it, into mere opinion. It is some safeguard against this danger that truth often comes to us through other minds, so that we learn that it is the common possession of several people; and it seems to me not all improbable that the knowledge of God's will should come to us in individual cases through the judgment and advice of others; care being taken that the advice of

others must not supersede, but only inform, our own conscience.

I was fifty-eight yesterday, and must expect such ailments as this and my increasing deafness; and of course life has its cares. When Princess Christian came to see us she said, "What a lovely place! there can be no worries here." But I said, "Care, Madam, is a very clever mountain climber."

I am so glad about your lads. If only people would see it, the Holy Eucharist is much more easy for simple people than the Offices which an evil custom has thrust into the place of it. It is an Act to be joined in, not a lot of difficult words and thoughts to be followed. There is an interesting passage to this effect in Mrs. Humphry Ward's last book. I think there are few things I hate so much as the prevalent English notion that Matins, usually beginning the day at 11 a.m., is the bounden duty of Christian people. For instructed people it is admirable, but for the simple it is often mere words.

CHRIST AND NATURAL LAWS

The world in which we were born, and into which Christ came, is not an alien world, but God's world; and the evil which we find in it, is not the fault of the world, but of men who misuse it. Its laws are not really cruel, but are made hard to us by our own sins. So our Lord, who knew no sin, came to submit to its laws, which He could not have done had they been evil, and showed us how that which is most sad may be transfigured, if among our miseries we lift up our eyes to see God's loving order around us. I groan under poverty or sickness because I have no hope;

but our Lord comes poor and dying to teach me that, if I believe in God, all things are for us and not against us. If I learn this lesson, then I rejoice in tribulation.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

I have long found St. Augustine's teaching about Evil (which is also the teaching of most thoughtful theologians) satisfactory, with perhaps a little expansion. There is not anything that is evil in itself, because nothing *is* save God Himself and that which God has made. But, since God has been pleased to make man capable of Will, and thus like Himself, there is involved a capacity of self-determination by which we can make evil existent, not in itself, for that would imply an absolute creative power in man, but in relation to ourselves. It is a real thing as it affects us, but not a real thing as forming part of God's universe. It is probably impossible to put this antithesis in logical language, because our conception of God is confessedly incomplete; but there are analogies to it. We cannot put "evil" into a mental bottle and label it, "This is evil"; but none the less we are constrained to recognise that there is an essential difference, and not one merely of fancy or of degree, between goodness and badness. The relation between telling the truth and telling lies is not merely one of degree, and the difference of sweetness between a wild plum and a cultivated plum. The testimony of conscience and of experience is that of St. Paul, that we must "put off all these" sins; but the testimony of the gardener is not that we must "put off" the wild plum, but that we must cultivate it into sweetness. "Evil," then, is to be identified not outside man

but in him, that is to say, in his will, which was bestowed on him in order that he might be capable of voluntary, *i.e.* moral goodness and not merely of mechanical and involuntary goodness. We were made to be capable of something nobler and more divine than mere lamps which shine because they cannot help shining.

The occasion of man making a bad use of his freedom is seldom the attraction of what it would be palpably wrong to do, but rather the attraction of some appetite which, while it would be perfectly right under proper conditions, under the actual conditions cannot be satisfied without sin. A man does not generally steal because he loves dishonesty, but because he desires money, which, under right restraints, it is quite proper to desire. We praise the man who, desiring £100, earns it by industry, while we blame the man who, having the same desire, gratifies it by theft. And no appetite which God has planted in us can be other than good and innocent in itself; lawful, if only it be used lawfully. Many of our desires we probably inherit from the lower animals from whom we are most likely descended. A cat desires food, and we neither blame his desire nor the theft by which he gratifies it, since he is conscious of no law bidding him restrain his desire. (We may, indeed, punish him for stealing, but there is no moral sense of reprobation in our censure.) I do not deny that in punishing him we may be beginning the lesson of responsibility to law, so that he may begin the next stage in his life on a higher platform than that which he occupies here; and it is quite possible that in some animals we may discern the beginnings of conscience. But taking animals as a body and contrasting them with men,

we may say that both classes have very similar appetites implanted by God, but that the animal cannot, and the man can, become conscious that appetite is only rightly gratified in subordination to a moral law. (I have said that it is generally the case that a man's appetites are in themselves innocent. I would not decide whether, in the case of a man who has habitually indulged his appetites without regard to a higher moral law, it is possible for him at last to desire a gratification just because he knows it to be wrong. Be this as it may, it is not the original, nor is it the normal, history of sin.)

If I have given the true account of sin, it follows that sin only exists by reason of the free will of man, and can only be eradicated by the discipline of the will. The cat may cease to steal because his circumstances are changed so that he can get food without the trouble of stealing it. He was neither wicked when he stole, nor is he virtuous when he ceases to steal: virtue and vice are non-existent to him. But the man who stole when he was poor and does not steal now that he is rich, may have gone through no moral change; he may be just as selfish as he was, just as ready to gratify whatever appetites he has, with no concern whether it is right for him to gratify them. This is the reason why a drunkard (say) may become sober because he is afraid of disgrace, and still be as selfish a man as he was. Now, the purpose of religion is to instruct and strengthen the will. It is by the training of the will that man is really freed from sin. We should have done but a slight good if we were to shut up all drunkards so that they cannot get at drink. What God aims at, and we should aim at, is making such a change in the man himself that he would keep sober if a gallon of gin was on the

table. In this way we shall see the defect of the argument that, because sin is in a sense accidental to us, it may be cast off like an old coat without any moral self-determination. It is quite possible that as we get older some appetites will grow feebler, or that circumstances may put the gratification of them out of our reach; and perhaps in another world we may find ourselves exempt from certain desires. This may be a help to us, because appetites which we have wrongfully indulged may, though they are innocent in themselves, have been allowed to grow too predominant. But it is something very different from victory over sin to find that I am no longer tempted to undue indulgence of the desire for drink, or that I had better give it up because it will ruin my health, or that I cannot get at it. The very purpose why God let the innocent desire for wine become a temptation to me, was that I should grow strong by battling with inclination; and unless the result of the temptation is the strengthening of my will, it has been a failure.

I feel with you that the "Imitation," though it has much that is valuable in it, is not a book to meet my own need. Compared with the Gospels it looks to me one-sided. Probably each age has a special aptitude to one form of truth, and the form which could be taken in at the time was that of Thomas. I feel also that the common view of Redemption is repulsive to me. I mean the view which may be summed up in the phrase that Christ suffered instead of us, and that His merits may be so reckoned to us that we may be counted righteous although we are actually full of sins. I am sure that our Lord became Man in order that He should set us free from our sins and enable us to be good; and that nothing less than

our goodness can be a satisfaction to God. All this I have said scores of times at Holy Trinity Church. What I believe our Lord did by His Passion was, first, to show us how immense is God's demand on our obedience; next, to show us that our Lord cares so much that we should become obedient to the Father, that, at great cost, He sets us the example of obedience; and, thirdly, that the Gift of the Holy Ghost is not merely to suggest to us a better life, but to enable us to obey in fellowship with our Lord at the cost of complete self-emptying, and so to open to us that glory of sanctity into which our Saviour rose. If in a sense our Salvation was accomplished on Calvary, it was accomplished potentially there, and it remains to be accomplished actually in us every time we learn from Christ's example and are enabled by His Spirit to overcome some sin; and it will be fully realised when our sanctification is completed.

But I think we do well to bear in mind that many a phrase which seems to us misleading has been used by persons perhaps much better than ourselves to express some truth. For instance, I suspect that phraseology about Substitution has often been used to mean the truth that we must look for salvation not to our unaided efforts but to the Grace of God in Christ.

I am more and more convinced as I get within view of the end of this life that the one proper test of religion is, How does it bring one nearer to holiness? It has a side on which it is in contact with philosophy, and here it offers a thousand problems which it is very interesting and very right that the intellect should try to solve; though we must bear in mind that we are hardly likely to arrive at a complete solution, because the most important element in it is God, of whom we

know so little. A complete solution is likely to be complete because we have left out of sight some element of the problem. It is easy to form a theory when we omit so many facts as do not readily fit in with it. But even at the best, if we may arrive at a satisfactory answer to our problems, it would count for little if it did not lead us to love God and our brethren, and to serve God in a holy life. And, if you will let an old friend give you the advice, I would urge you to use this Lent the self-denial of putting aside for the time perplexing questions, and trying to get a quiet and deep conception of the old Catholic Faith, which has the testimony that it has lasted hundreds of years and has trained thousands of holy men and women. There are many good books which one might well study a fiftieth time and find still instructive, such as Strong's "Manual of Christian Doctrine," and Mason's "Faith of the Gospel"; but for my own part I hardly know a book which is so unfailing a source of wise reflection as Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," especially Book V. It is perhaps an advantage that it is old, and so takes one rather aloof from the pressing questions of to-day. Such books lay a more solid foundation than most of the books which are subject to the urgency of the moment. But if you prefer a more recent book which is of the same tone, I would recommend Father Tyrrell's "Lex Credendi." I have any of these books at your service, if your father does not happen to possess them. Tyrrell's work has of course a few Roman passages which I could not endorse, but on the whole I know few books which are so deeply religious. I think you would be wise to be careful about the books you read, but I am sure your father is wise in leaving the choice of them mainly to your own conscience. Perhaps it would be

well for the time to abstain from reading a book until you have heard it or its author praised by somebody whom you can trust. If you went to a chemist's shop and, without guidance from a doctor, sipped a little from every bottle which took your fancy, you would run a great chance of being poisoned. There are plenty of poisonous books, and plenty of books which, though they may have their use for certain people at certain times, are not food for everybody always. I have suffered too much from indiscriminate reading not to beg you to be cautious.

THE PROBLEM OF SIN PRACTICAL RATHER THAN THEORETICAL

I should like to put down a thought which has been much in my mind when I have been praying about you. It may be impossible to form an adequate theory about sin and its relation to our sonship to God. But must we not remember that neither sin nor the cure of it meets us as a matter of theory, but as a matter of practice? Whatever may be the nature of sin, it is that which spoils human lives and deranges human consciences. It is that which makes men hate and hurt one another, and forbids us to have a quiet conscience and to grow in peace with God. I do not mean that there may not be a theoretical way of accounting for it, or that it may not be our duty at the proper time to seek for it. But I think that that time comes after a persevering effort to destroy it practically. It seems to me like some bacterial theory of disease, which may be a very worthy object of study, but which we are not very likely to study to much effect until we have got a

good practical knowledge of fevers and have done our best to cure them.

And what this week seems to teach us is that practical effort against evil should come before a theoretical account of it. Possibly our Lord has not given us any very clear and coherent account of what sin is and how it comes to exist in us ; but what He does show us is how to fight against it even to death ; and this is the lesson which His saints have learned from Him.

Try then to deepen the sense of sin, to feel about it and to hate it as He does ; and be content to wait awhile until a reasonable logical conception of it is formed in the mind. We are not all of us called to be philosophers, but we are called to be saints after the example which we shall study to-morrow. I believe I am right in saying this, because I can think but loosely just now, but I hope I can ask to have a clean conscience.

HISTORY A REMEDY FOR PESSIMISM

I often think that history is the one study which gives a reasonable remedy for pessimism, because it shows how in spite of untold mistakes and crimes mankind has on the whole progressed. It was inevitable that at the first coming of the Gospel into the heathen world, the most prominent effect should be disorder. It broke down old traditions, even prejudices, and it required time and earnestness to substitute for them better principles. When people say that converts in India are worse than the heathen, I have no doubt they say what is partly true. A new religion naturally attracts a disproportionate number

of weak and unstable people, and many adopt it externally without giving their hearts to obey it. In this case the only true test is the long run; and I do not think it can be doubted that Italy was much better in the Middle Ages than in (say) 300 A.D.

SOME PRESENT-DAY QUESTIONS

AGAINST LEAVING THE ENGLISH CHURCH

THE ground on which I am convinced, and more strongly as I grow older, of the duty of remaining patiently in the English part of the family of Christ is that here God has placed me, and hence I dare not stir unless I am quite convinced that the English Church is not really part of God's family at all. If, for instance, I were convinced that we have no valid orders or Sacraments, then of course I must go where they may be found. But I have no right to change because there are irksome things here, or desirable things there. That would be selfishness. I have no doubt there are some things in which Rome is more right than England, though I am not sure that I am competent to judge between them. But joining Rome means abandoning the place in which Providence placed me (for it was clearly Providence that set me where I am) without being convinced that that place is not one which is acknowledged by God.

I feel as much as anybody the misery of our divisions; but I see just the same sort of divisions, though they are not about the same matters, nor perhaps expressed so freely (because a more rigid discipline makes people more afraid of speaking out), in the Roman Communion.

It has been said that in Mediæval Spain if a man

was anxious to adhere to the formulated doctrines of the Church he had nothing to do but not to *think*; nowadays he has also not to *read*, not to *talk*.

I am sure that the things which make our life fruitful are not the things which are congenial, but the things which press upon us and pain us. Wealth, for instance, is pleasant, but poverty teaches us the virtues of thrift, self-denial, etc. I transfer the thought to religion, and wonder whether it is not just the irksome things (such as the opposition of others and their want of agreement) which really makes us firm Christians. Certainly an older generation, which had to be content with rare Communion, found it hard to get a Confession received, and went to church among brickbats, produced a more stalwart race than those who have all sorts of advantages at hand. And I wonder whether the chief reason why God has given us an appointed place whence we dare not swerve, is not less that we should have comforts and advantages, than that we should have to bear with contradictions and things which irk us, so that by them we should learn self-discipline. I think the Catholic Church provides both things: the exhilaration which comes from association with those who agree with us, and the discipline which comes from association with those who differ from us, yet from whom we dare not sever ourselves. The Protestant, finding something which displeases him in his own sect, thinks himself at liberty to find out and join another sect in which it does not exist; an easy and pleasant course, but I doubt whether it forms a solid Christian character. The reason which makes many people leave England for Rome seems to me essentially Protestant: they are pained by something here, and go there in the hope of avoiding it.

Of course, if a person is really convinced that the Roman Church is exclusively the body founded by Christ, he is bound to join her, even though he expects to find irksome things there. But I do not think that average people take the step for this reason.

LOYALTY TO THE ENGLISH CHURCH

It is astounding how lightly people take such a serious step as leaving the place where Providence has placed them. Of course it is conceivable that a person might feel compelled to do so; but there is so strong a presumption against such a change that one ought to be very good, very docile habitually to God's will, very sure that one is not ascribing his own faults to a lack of grace in his position, before doing so.

I feel to the full with you the difficulties in the English Church. I cannot think that she is any less fallen than the Roman, though the sort of fall is different—ours on this side, theirs on that. I cannot but see that the whole of Christendom has fallen from our Lord's design; but I think He has warned us of this. The promise that the "gates of Hades (or death) shall not prevail" seems to me to involve a prediction of the Church's fall and death; for it can only be to a society which is, or will be, a prisoner of death that the promise can suitably be made that the prison-gates will not permanently restrain it. The death of the Church I look upon as the fulfilment in the Church of that which is revealed in her Head—the being so identified with the sinful world that He is "made sin for us," and dies the accursed death. But I believe that the Church, like Christ, cannot be holden of death, but will come to a glorious Resurrection. Meanwhile our hope lies in our duty—to persist

in that which God gives us to do. There is a saying which Dean Church quotes with respect to the English Church—*Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna*, “Sparta is your lot—make her fair.” Sparta was the less desirable part of Greece, barren and uncultured; but her citizens were not to desert her for Corinth or Athens, but to do their best to make her fair. And while I see many things amiss with us, and many in which Rome excels us, I cannot but feel grateful that we are not committed to sentimental superstitions, that we are not hindered from sober thought, and that we can without disloyalty confess the fall of our portion of the Lord’s family, and strive to remedy it. I know that many of the best priests in Italy and France feel with me, but they dare not express their shame lest they should be censured. The need of all Christendom, and of every member of it, is deeper and more contrite humility.

THE ROMAN CONTROVERSY

It is quite right that we should know the outlines of the divergence between ourselves and Rome, not for the sake of controversy, but that we may be able to give an answer to those who question us. I think there is no better book on the subject than Bishop Gore’s “Roman Catholic Claims,” which is now published at 6*d.* (Longmans). The strength of it is shown by the weakness of Dom Chapman’s reply, though he is a more skilful pleader.

The one serious difference is about the authority of the Bishop of Rome. We gladly own that he occupies the first, *i.e.* most dignified, see, but we see no reason to suppose that he differs in spiritual authority from other bishops; just as the Archbishop

of Canterbury is the primate of this part of England, but only a bishop among others who have the same authority from Christ. It is only a matter of ecclesiastical arrangement that he presides, and we think the same about the Pope.

To maintain the position which the Romanists give to the Pope, three assumptions are made, none of which has ever been proved :

1. That St. Peter had any pre-eminence over the other apostles, save that which came from his strong personal character. St. Paul treats him as a brother, not as a superior.

2. That St. Peter ever was Bishop of Rome. He probably went there only just before his death, when the Church of Rome had long been established by others.

3. That, if he was Bishop of Rome, and if he had a special authority, he could hand on this privilege to his successors in the see.

The Eastern Churches agree with us in thinking these assertions unproved. The dignity which was undoubtedly given to the Bishop of Rome during many centuries depended, we think, upon the fact that he was bishop of the ruling city of the world ; that that city had been honoured by the martyrdom there of St. Peter and Paul ; that many venerable men had held the see ; and that Rome had done a noble work in sending out the founders of many of the Churches of the West. These considerations warrant his primacy, but not his supremacy.

One argument against his supremacy (*i.e.* his claim to be more than a bishop among bishops) is this : when a layman is raised to the diaconate, it is not merely by election but by ordination, *i.e.* by the sacramental gift of the Holy Spirit ; and similarly

when the deacon is made a priest, or a priest is made a bishop, it is by ordination. But when the former Bishop of Venice was made Pope, he was made simply by the election of the Cardinals, and no additional gift was bestowed on him by ordination.

We believe, then, that every bishop whom God has placed over His flock has the same spiritual authority as any other. It may be a convenient arrangement that certain bishops should have a priority over others; but this we consider a matter of human arrangement. Dr. Ingram is the chief Pastor whom God has placed over the Church in London.

Now, the Romanist says that the Bishop of London has no authority because he is not dependent on the Pope. This can only be asserted if the assumptions which I have mentioned are true. If they are not true, how can we regard the bishops and priests whom the Pope sends to England but as intruders? The case is not at all the same with them as it is with the Anglican bishops and priests in Italy, etc. We are sent here simply because there are English people living abroad who are refused the Sacraments at the altars of the country, and therefore would live as heathens unless they were provided for otherwise. We have no commission to minister to Italians; we do not admit them to our Services, and we should think it a sin to convert them. If the Roman Catholic clergy in London ministered only to Italians there would be little cause to object to them; though even then the cases would not be quite similar, because no Italian Catholic would be repelled from our altars, or required to make any recantation of his old belief. But, taking the state of Christendom as it is, and not as it ought to be, it is certain that an Italian coming to London, if he could not find a church of his own

sort, would probably go nowhere ; so that it is at least admissible that they should have clergy of their own to minister to them. But this is not the habit of the Roman Catholic clergy in England. They try to draw away persons who are by God's ordinance subject to the Bishop of London ; they deny that he is a true bishop and has authority from Christ ; and if they gain a convert they teach him that he has never yet received a true Communion or Absolution ; and they even affect to suppose that Anglican Baptism is so carelessly administered that they rebaptise a convert, though they admit that baptism even by a layman is valid.

Now, what about attending a Roman Service in London ? The first point I would mention is that it is a very serious matter to attend the Service of Almighty God. It is not a thing which a devout person could do merely to gratify curiosity by seeing how things are done ; or again to gratify the æsthetic desire of good music, etc. Next, we must remember that we have no right to worship God save in the way in which He ordains that we should worship Him. Worship is not the arbitrary offering of man, but his response to the claims of God. Unless the claims of Rome are justified, her action in England is schismatical, and to join in their worship is an act of schism. Possibly some exception might be justly made in the case of Services which are not only for the purpose of worship but are occasions of showing friendly affection, such as a wedding or a funeral ; but in ordinary cases it seems to me clear that for a person who is not convinced that the Papal claims are just (in which case, of course, he has no choice but to join the Roman Church), to attend Roman Catholic Services in England is sinful as an act of self-will and

schism. For this reason I have long made it my rule not even to visit a Roman Catholic church in England for the sake of seeing its architecture; not that I should think such a visit wrong in itself, but because I would not give people occasion to suspect that I had been there for the purpose of worship.

There is another point on which I must say a word. Many people visit a Roman Catholic church in England out of curiosity, and are drawn on to interest, and ultimately to conversion.

We are by no means called upon to assert that everything English is true and everything Roman wrong. When there is a schism, each side usually retains some good things which the other side loses; and I am quite prepared to allow not only that there is much to venerate in the Roman Church, but also that she has some advantages which we have lost. But unless I am convinced that she is the only Church, and that we are heretics and outside the Body of Christ, I am clear that I have no right to attend her Services.

ATTENDING PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES IN SCOTLAND

Though I have never been in Scotland, I have of course often had to consider the question of attending Presbyterian Services. In the case of people living where attendance at Catholic Services is generally impossible, and where the choice lies between going to the Presbyterian Church or going nowhere, it has seemed to me right to attend the Presbyterian Church, barring of course the Holy Communion. My reason is this, that Christian men have a right to meet together to pray and read the Bible, and there is

nothing schismatical in doing so. One would gladly worship with a number of farmers in remote places in Australia who might meet for such a purpose, which, as you say, might be regarded as a sort of family prayers; and I should not think it right to let questions of order and doctrine, which do not arise on such an occasion, hinder me from meeting thus with persons who may be in error, but who love our Lord and desire to serve Him. I suspect that He Himself acted thus with the Samaritans.

But I should not think the same when Catholic Services can be reached. I would not judge or condemn my Presbyterian neighbours, but I would judge myself. How can I be faithful to God's mercy in placing me where the old orders and the old traditions are preserved? I should not think myself faithful if, in such a case, I went to the Services of a body whose ministers are not accepted as duly ordained by our own or any other part of the Catholic Church.

I think the practice of attending Presbyterian Services under such circumstances is based upon entirely wrong considerations. People often say that as the Catholic Church is established in England, so is the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. Putting aside the very uncertain meaning of the term "established," I entirely repudiate the claim that the Crown, or the State, or Parliament has any power to decide questions of spiritual duty towards God. For various reasons of politics, Parliament may give endowments or other advantages to this or that religious body, but its action has nothing whatever to do with the question of conscience, "how can I obey Christ's command?" It is quite conceivable that Parliament might in this way "establish" Buddhism or Mahomedanism; but this would not make these

religions either true or false. All that the State has really done in Scotland is to say that such a society should hold such buildings and such other property. It says nothing, and can say nothing, as to the question whether that Society is or is not accordant with the Will of God. For my own part, if I had the choice, I would rather worship with the Free Church than with the Established Church, if only to show that I pay no regard at all to the question of Establishment.

Then some people justify their attendance at Presbyterian Services on the ground that Presbyterianism is the religion of the Scottish People. I think history takes off a considerable discount from the statement. The Reformation was, in a great measure, a violent forcing upon the people of changes which they did not welcome; and even at the date of William III. a great part of Scotland—in some districts, I believe, the majority—remained faithful to the bishops. Then the political circumstances of the time—the allegiance of many to the Stuarts—led to a cruel persecution: Episcopal Churches were burned down, and priests were forbidden to celebrate the Sacraments, etc., in the presence of more than five persons. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the Episcopalians in Scotland shrank to a very small body; but it is hardly true to say that Presbyterianism was the free choice of almost all the Scottish people. They had practically no choice.

(I do not say this to cast any special condemnation on the Presbyterians. The times were such that toleration was seldom regarded, and the persecution by the Presbyterians was no more cruel and unjust than those carried on elsewhere by other bodies. But the facts modify the assertion that Presbyterianism was the free choice of the Scottish people.)

But even if they had freely chosen this form of organisation, I cannot think that the will of the people determines the will of God. The English Church has maintained the ancient discipline which the Presbyterians have rejected; and it seems to me impossible for a person to be a loyal English Churchman and yet favour those who have rejected what she treats as a basic commandment.

I would not for a moment shut my eyes to the evident blessings which God has given to Presbyterians. I gladly acknowledge not only the eminent saintliness of individuals among them, but also the godly character of the Scottish people, which may well make us English blush. But for all that I cannot think that God has left the doctrine and the organisation of His Church to the will of the people. The reasonable conclusion from such a statement seems to be that Christianity is not a revealed religion, but is left for each individual, or each group of individuals, to fashion as they think best. No doubt there is much to be said for such a view, but it is inconsistent, I think, with the position of a loyal English Churchman.

Further, I think it is ungenerous of an English Churchman to discredit the scanty remnant of the Episcopal (or I would rather say, the Catholic) Church. If persecution has left her weak, it is the more imperative to be loyal to her. If Bishops and priests in Scotland are separated from the vast majority of Scotchmen on minor points, I should think they have no right to separate—they would be schismatical, and ought to cease to exist. But they claim (I believe rightly) to be separated on grounds of great moment—no less than the question to whom Christ has entrusted the Government of His Church and the

administration of His Sacraments. It cannot but weaken the influence of a priest if his people treat the question as unimportant, by attending indifferently the Services which he claims to celebrate as the successor of the Apostles and those which are celebrated by persons whom he (and the Church to which he belongs) cannot so regard.

For my own part, I should not be very keen in trying to win to the Church good Christian people of other denominations. I cannot forget that in these denominations there are very many people who find grace to serve God devoutly; there is often a sort of self-will in change of religion, even if that change is from worse to better. I would rather leave them to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I should therefore sympathise with a priest in Scotland who, while believing that the old discipline is ordained by God, should yet not regard it as his task to try to win Presbyterians. But if I were in his position I should be careful to let it be seen that my action was not prompted by the vulgar laxity which makes differences unimportant, and treats them as mere matters of taste and opinion, like the preference of one man for roses and another for lilies. Against this laxity I protest, because it seems to me to make man's choice and not God's law the arbiter. We have far too much of this among ourselves, where one man goes to St. A.'s because "he *likes* vestments," or another to St. B.'s because "he *likes* the vicar's sermons." What we ought to study is not what we like, but what God ordains; and it would be seriously detrimental to this teaching if any person were to worship to-day in the Catholic church and to-morrow (say) in the Baptist chapel, as he liked or as he thought fit.

I have gained the friendship of many good men of

various religions. I think them mistaken, and no doubt they think me mistaken; but we understand and respect each other. They see that, where I cannot agree with them, it is not a matter of choice but of duty as I read it; and I think they honour me for hating the cheap popularity which gives away not preferences but principles.

If, then, I were in Scotland, I should not try to unsettle my Presbyterian neighbours. On the contrary, I should urge them to make the best use of the means of grace which they have in their own Church, and I would have no one leave it unless he was sure that he was led by the Holy Spirit and not by any personal preference. But I would do nothing to lead them to believe that I hold the differences unimportant. As a member of the Church I should try to show myself entirely loyal to her. And the rest is in God's hands.

SAME SUBJECT

You ask me in yours of July 6 what I think about attending Presbyterian services in Scotland. I have never been in the country, so have never been obliged to decide for myself; but in case there were no "Episcopal" church within reach, I think I should go to the Presbyterian, on the ground that, so long as no pretence is made of the performance of sacerdotal functions by one who is not duly ordained, it is the right and duty of Christian men to meet together to pray, and I should feel at liberty to join with them. I would not, of course, receive the "Communion" from them, for it is at the best a very doubtful point whether they have Orders which entitle them to celebrate the Holy Communion; but the question of Orders does not come in in the case of prayers and preaching. Any man might

use them in his own house, and I do not see that there is anything wrong in his doing so with 100 or more people joining. And, whatever may be the character of Presbyterianism in its rise, a modern Scotch congregation is not acting in a schismatical intention. Moreover, I should be sorry to set an example of absence from worship to people who deserve praise for their regular use of it. There might, however, be special cases in which I should be more right to stay away. If I had the choice I would rather go to the Free Church than to the Established, so as to give no countenance to the prevalent notion that the State can really "establish" a religion, or that Presbyterianism becomes right by being recognised by Parliament or Sovereign.

FUNDS FOR A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

I think the question about helping a bazaar for a Presbyterian Church is difficult, and there are a good many details which one would need to consider in particular cases. I can only say generally what principles ought, to my mind, to be considered.

First, I think one ought to put definitely aside any fear of being considered narrow. If a thing is right, it ought to be done whatever people may say about it; and it is a concession to popular cant to be afraid of being thought narrow. Anybody who upholds what is true, or what he believes to be true, will always seem narrow to those who think otherwise. True breadth of mind seems to me not to treat principles as flexible under popular opinion, but to endeavour to see clearly *all* the principles which are concerned in a particular case, and to give each one its due value; remembering that the only thing that

has a claim to obedience is Right, and that the claims of Right must not be ignored.

Again, I entirely reject the common argument that because Presbyterianism is "established" in Scotland, therefore it ought to be supported by English Church people. It was "established" by Act of Parliament, and Parliament, though it can bestow land or money or buildings, can never decide what is true. My own sympathy, I may say, is more with the disestablished Free Church, and I am no lover of Church Establishments.

But when I look at the facts in Scotland, do these considerations compel me to think that it would be wrong for a Catholic to support such a bazaar? I am in doubt, and can only say what seems to me the right principle. One must remember that, for good or ill, Presbyterianism is the existing religion of the vast majority of Scotch people; that if they did not go to the Presbyterian Church they would go nowhere; also that the Presbyterians are religious people, who hold a great part of Christian truth, and that they have done, thank God, a very great work in teaching Scotch people to live a godly life. No Catholic can, I think, read the history of Scotland without recognising thankfully the noble work of the Presbyterian Church, which in many ways puts us to shame. Moreover, whatever may have been the origin of Presbyterianism, it is not now, I fancy, schismatical in intent, as trying to draw people away from the Catholic Faith.

Now, supposing I were living in a part of Scotland which was not provided with a church, and were asked to contribute to building one, what should I consider? I ought to consider that if the church were not built a vast number of people would grow up without Christian influences, that they would not attend a

Catholic church, nor would it be well for them to do so merely from reasons of proximity, without accepting the faith and discipline of the Church; that in any case there would probably be no Catholic church within reach; also I should consider that in the Providence of God the Scottish people have apparently been entrusted to a society in which, though I cannot see certain signs of the historic society which Christ founded, I am bound to see much that is excellent and helpful, and the usefulness of which is evident.

So I should be faced by the duty of trying to adjust two apparently opposite sets of considerations, and the adjustment might require other considerations, such as the prospect of encouraging by my example certain claims made on behalf of the Presbyterian Church which I cannot admit. But taking a general view of the matter, which is all that I can take, I can conceive circumstances in which I should think it right to subscribe to the fund, or to another fund for like purposes. And what it might be right for me to do as an inconspicuous person, it might also be right to do if I were in a more conspicuous position. But I do not think I should be right in subscribing without explaining my views to the Bishop and consulting him whether I should by subscribing be likely to prejudice the cause of the Catholic Church, especially in a country where she has to bear special difficulties, and to encourage the popular view that men may join whatever religious society they may prefer, and that there is no society which has the prerogative of having been founded and ordered by Christ Himself.

THE USE OF WINE AT HOLY COMMUNION

Our Lord used and ordered us to use wine at the Holy Communion. Though the word does not occur in the history of the institution, we know that the Cup contained wine with a little water, partly because this was what the cup at the Jewish Passover contained, and partly because the use of wine has been unbroken in the Church. And it is distinctly ordered by the English Prayer-book. It would be self-will for us to disregard the command of the Church; and much worse self-will for us to disregard the ordinance of our Lord by using anything else than that which He ordained.

Wine is the fermented juice of the grape. There is no reason for supposing that the "wine" used by our Lord was anything else than ordinary wine. The same word is used with respect to the wine at Cana (an instance which showed that He did not condemn the moderate use of wine as a beverage), and also when we are told "not to be drunk with wine, wherein is excess." It is probable that juice freshly squeezed from the grape would be fit for use at the Altar, because, although it is not yet fermented, it is capable of fermentation: but that it was not this fresh juice that He used is clear from the date of the institution, which was the Passover time, or Easter, March or April. Now grape-juice cannot be kept without fermentation for more than a very few days; certainly not from the vintage of the preceding summer or autumn. That which some people call unfermented wine is kept from fermentation by the addition of some antiseptic, such as salicylic acid, which has the property of destroying the possibility of fermentation, so that the juice so treated can never become wine

It would therefore be very uncertain whether the Lord would so bless a thing which He has not ordained so as to make it His Blood; especially when the use of it was not by accident, but by a deliberate refusal to use that which He has ordained.

I cannot think that in any case it would be right to set aside our Lord's ordinance. If we blame the Roman Church for the rashness of refusing the Cup to the people, what could we say for ourselves if we refused to use at all the Cup which He ordained? Nor can I think that to a person who comes to the Altar with a sincere faith there can be any danger. Of course I have heard that the least taste of wine revives the old craving, but I have never come across a case in which a relapse has come from receiving the Holy Communion. I cannot think that what He ordained for our salvation could be permitted to work for our destruction if we use it humbly and faithfully. A person whose mind is filled with the conviction that this is indeed the very Blood of Christ will not think about the outward form of wine under which it is given. I should have no fear; but if I had, I should resort to the method of communion which is used in the Eastern Churches, and which I have often found convenient in the case of persons too ill to swallow—that of dipping the Host in the Cup, and giving both kinds together. In this way one would avoid the scent of a large quantity of wine, which might possibly suggest bad thoughts. But I would far rather use the common way, and trust to the faithfulness of our Saviour to keep safe one who is filled with faith in Him.

And if I found that a person would not receive the Holy Communion because he would not trust our Lord to keep him safe, I should not think it right to present

him for Confirmation. The Sacraments are a blessing to those who receive them humbly and obediently, otherwise what should have been for our wealth is to us an occasion of falling. I should try to persuade such a person that our Lord, who ordained the use of wine in the Sacrament which He enjoined on us, knew better than any man what is good for us, and may be trusted to keep those who rely on Him.

MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY

With what you say about marriage I sympathise fully. Marriage is God's ordinance for men and women, except to the few whom He calls to celibacy ; and celibacy from circumstances, not from vocation, is a very serious evil, and the root of many others. And often, as you say, men do not marry because they are too selfish to limit their pleasures. But often a young man has to abstain from marriage because he cannot support a wife—I have just now a sad instance of this—and sometimes a girl is too selfish to marry a poor man ; and parents have to be cautious about sanctioning a marriage with small means, and often they are too cautious. And it is certainly an evil when a man has to depend on relations for the support of his wife (or widow) and children—of which case also I have painful experience. In fact, the causes of the evil are very many. It presses chiefly on young people of the educated class, for in the lower classes people marry only too readily.

This is a disordered world. Something can be done to set it more right by living and upholding a simpler life. But our Lord came into a disordered world, and bore its stress, where kings were tyrants, priests hypocrites, and simple people sufferers. One

cannot escape the disorder and the suffering which it causes; and God makes sufferings into sacraments. Many persons who are not called internally to celibacy have sanctified it by looking at inevitable circumstances as a sort of external call.

God does not will evils, but He wills that we should act voluntarily, thereby running the risk of our choosing evil, and if we suffer from the evil which others choose, He makes it into an education for us. One of the daily papers is now printing a discussion, "Do we get our deserts?" The Christian view is propounded by our Lord: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

DIVORCE

With regard to divorce:—

1. The State is right in not enforcing Christ's law upon those who do not recognise His authority.

2. Christians are bound by Christ's law, be the law of the State what it may.

3. Christ (St. Matt. xix. 6) and St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 2) teach the impossibility of divorce.

4. Yet in St. Matt. v. 31, our Lord seems to allow one exception. Of this three views are possible—

(a) That the exception only refers to the divorce, not to the re-marriage. According to this view the passage might be paraphrased: Even Moses put some restriction upon separation; it was not to be done impulsively, but by a regular legal procedure. But I forbid it altogether, save in the case of one most grievous sin. But even if a wife is put away (as may be done in this one case) there must be no re-marriage.

- (b) Divorce can only be in the case of unfaithfulness, after which the innocent party may re-marry.
- (c) Divorce is never possible; but sin before marriage (in some cases) makes marriage impossible, and therefore the discovery of such a sin makes the marriage void, and sets the parties (or at least the innocent party) free to marry.

Personally, I am inclined to think (a) is the true interpretation; *i.e.* that what is now called "judicial separation" is only permitted in one extreme case, and that divorce with right of re-marriage is altogether forbidden.

(b) expresses the view to some extent condoned in the Eastern Church. I think there is least to be said for (c). It seems to narrow the meaning of the sin which is excepted, by regarding it as premarital only. And such sin is not, in most cases, considered as making a subsequent marriage illegal. But, although I suspect this reason may be mistaken, the practical conclusion agrees with (a), that re-marriage is always forbidden. It is, I think, a case of right action based on wrong arguments.

I think it is clear that the English Church accepts the solution of (a) and (c). She is bound by all old Canons not repealed, and the language of the marriage Service is unmistakable. I should say, then, to any English person contemplating divorce and re-marriage, that he is forbidden by the law of that part of the Church in which God has placed him; that in my opinion such marriage is forbidden by the law of Christ. If it is not against the law of Christ, then it might be argued that the lax discipline of the English Church is some excuse for tolerating such re-marriages.

So I should urge any Christian person not to transgress what is certainly the law of the English Church and may very probably be the law of Christ.

With regard to the Holy Orthodox Church in the matter of divorce: the Canon of the Church forbids divorce as absolutely as in the West. But the Nomocanon of Justinian, in which he tried to modify secular law in accordance with spiritual as far as possible, permits it in some cases, more than that which may be indicated in St. Matt. v. And a custom has grown up in the Church of permitting what is nevertheless confessed to be wrong—re-marriage. A scrupulous priest would refuse to re-marry a divorced person. But it is easy to get the services of a less conscientious man.

And when the re-marriage has taken place the practice of the Church is to say it is a bad job, but cannot be helped, and to give Communion to the persons concerned, on the ground that it would not be right or prudent to expel them altogether from Christian blessings. The Canon then forbids such marriage; but the half-authoritative comment on the Canon says that it is the custom to act according to the civil law in such matters.

For people who do not submit to the law of Christ or that of the Church, I should say that we have no means of deciding whether such remarriage is sinful or not. And there might be a difficult question if persons so married in unbelief afterwards came to accept the teaching of the Church of Christ.

THE CHURCH'S FAILURE IN DISCIPLINE

I think the question is a difficult one. The difficulty arises to a great extent from the unfaithfulness of the Church. There can be no doubt that such a "marriage" is against the law of God, which no law of the State makes void. It is not like the case of an "innocent party" in which there is room for doubt whether our Lord permits re-marriage. If the Church had been faithful, he would have been put out of the Communion of the Church for the sin of several years ago. Discipline might have led to repentance; but if not, he would have been as a heathen, openly separated from the Kingdom of Christ, and that Kingdom would have had no further right to judge one who was "without." It would have been quite permissible for Christians to have social relations with such a person.

(I do not mean that, even then, we should not have a right as citizens to oppose such unions. Monogamy is not only the law of Christ's Kingdom but also the surest foundation of secular society; and merely as citizens we should have a right to do our best to discourage such unions. Only we should do so in such a case, not on the ground that they are forbidden by the law of God, which the parties do not acknowledge, but they are injurious to civil society.)

But, to our shame, things are not thus. If the sinner is excommunicate he is so simply by force of his own conscience or indifference. If he were to claim Communion to-morrow, there is grave doubt whether he would be refused, and, indeed, whether he ought to be refused, seeing that no legal action ending in censure has been taken against him.

Nor can we as individuals set things right. We

ought indeed to be ashamed of the sin of the Church, and pray and endeavour to bring her back to obedience to our Lord. But, although St. Paul bids us "with such a man not to eat," he speaks in view of a faithful Church, and it is not certain that we ought to act strictly on this direction, seeing that the whole Church, and specially the English part of it, is unfaithful.

On the other hand, it does seem to me that it is our duty, as individual Christians, so to act as to make it clear that such unions are, in the case of professing Christians, unholy. We are bound to let it be known not only to the persons immediately concerned, but also to society at large, that they are, and are recognised by us as, unholy.

While, then, I could not say that a Christian is bound to refuse all intercourse with those who have entered into such an union, I do think we are bound to do our best to let it be known that we look at it as wicked: to the persons themselves, and also to others who might be misled into thinking that we condone whatever the law of the land does not forbid.

PURITY IN MAN AND WOMAN

There are, of course, certain commandments of God which are only given to certain people, and they only are bound by them. *E.g.* the commandment to give alms does not bind paupers; and commands which are generally binding, do not bind those who cannot keep them, *e.g.* a cast-away on a desert island is not bound to receive the Holy Communion.

But when God gives a command to human beings as such, and there is nothing which makes it impossible to keep it, *i.e.* nothing to show that, in that

particular case, God wills otherwise, then the command is certainly binding upon all. And this is the case with what are called the moral, as distinguished from the positive, commands.

And I think it is really a want of charity to encourage any people, or class of people, to exempt themselves from any part of God's law. *E.g.* to teach a young man that, as a gentleman, he could not but fight duels was to weaken him by diminishing the help that would have come to him from the emphatic words of the sixth commandment. It was to encourage him in sin, which is the only real evil.

The difficulty arises at the present day chiefly in respect of the seventh commandment. Many people think that young men cannot keep that commandment. I am convinced that they are wrong. I cannot believe that God commands what it is impossible to do. It is only impossible if they refuse to use the helps which God provides. If a man will not pray, will not fast, will not frequent the Sacraments, will not avoid occasions of sin, then I allow he cannot keep the commandment. But then it is our real kindness not to minimise the commandment, but to point out and urge the necessary helps and remedies.

No doubt the case is complicated by the difficulty in our modern civilization of early marriage, which is, as the Prayer-book says, "ordained as a remedy against sin." In particular cases we should have the tenderest compassion for a young man who, being thus hindered, fails. But it is not kindness to lead him to suppose that he must fail. By doing so we rob him of a motive which will help him to struggle; and it is surely nobler that he should struggle and fail than that he should not struggle at all.

So far as to the general principle. As to its application in particular cases there are further considerations. We must consider the special temptations of individuals, the degree of gravity of a fall, the apparent extent of the damage done to character.

1. Young men are certainly more exposed to temptation than young women. They go about unguarded, they join in more mixed society (often of necessity), they are robbed of a safeguard (as I said above) by the prevalence of a low moral tone. They may therefore more easily go astray than their sisters, and there is more guilt in sinning against helps than in sinning for lack of helps.

2. As to this I need only say that the degree of sin is very variable; *e.g.* once or a hundred times, as tempter or as tempted, and the like.

3. I am inclined to think that the moral ruin caused by such sins is greater in a woman than in a man. Partly because, as I have said, he sins without helps, she against helps; partly because society bans her, and she falls lower, whereas he, mixing still in decent society, is helped to sin; and also partly (as I think) because such sin is more central in her than in him. Each sex, I suppose, as it has its characteristics, has also its characteristic virtues to acquire; and I think that modesty is the special characteristic of woman. She is the guardian of it, not only for herself, but for the man also. A young man who had sinned very terribly was brought to repentance lately by nothing so much as the thought that his mother, a noble woman, must know his sin. Perhaps one may say that purity is an essential part of the structure of every noble life, but it is the very keystone of the woman's life.

Now, as to practical action. I think you are quite

right in maintaining in your own mind, and, as far as circumstances call on you to testify, in your testimony, that God's law is binding on all, men as well as women. Allowing a low tone of thought is apt to produce a low habit of action.

But in dealing with particular cases one is bound to bear in mind extenuating circumstances, such as I have suggested. You would do so in a case of stealing. You would say, "God forbids theft; but I must remember that X. was badly brought up—was not instructed—failed under sudden temptation—was starving when he stole," etc. One must pray before speaking; one must think of the sinner with compassion—should not we have done as badly had our circumstances been the same? We have not only to abash the sinner, but also to raise him up—to help him to see how he has degraded the noble nature which God gave him, taking "members of Christ" to use them for sin. You must not stand aloof, but, as Christ "became sin for us, who knew no sin," so must you take his sin upon yourself, confess it to God if he does not confess it, pray for him if he does not pray for himself, try to make holiness beautiful. A hard thing to do, and one which you will only do imperfectly; but who knows how even your imperfect following of our Lord may win the sinner?

A word on the other matter. I suppose Temptation is the use of innocent things by a wicked will to seduce us from the Will of God, *e.g.* Satan (a wicked will) uses wine (an innocent thing) to seduce us from God's law of sobriety.

Now, in our Saviour's case, all this was done. Satan used food, confidence in God, the desire for possession, to tempt Him. He was no less than ourselves affected by the desire for food, by the desire to

prove God's promise, by the desire to regain for Himself the world which Satan had usurped. But He saw through the baits which Satan displayed, to the godless will and purpose of Satan; and He resisted the temptation, and could do no other, being God.

But in ourselves the temptation finds a will already weakened by original and subsequent actual sin, *e.g.* habits of self-indulgence in us would answer to the temptation to gratify our hunger. That is to say, temptation acts in us on our enfeebled will, in Him on a Will which was perfect and strong. The difference then between Him and us is not that the temptation is different, but that the will upon which it would work is different.

To this we may perhaps add a further difference. By our compliances we have encouraged Satan to use baits which would have had no attraction if we had not sinned. Z. was for thirty years sober; he could pass a tavern without any temptation. Then he gave way to drink, and now cannot see one without being tempted to intemperance. So Milton makes Satan refuse Beelzebub's proposal to tempt our Lord with gross temptations. They would not attract Him. But here again the difference is between the wills which are tempted rather than the temptations. The world and the flesh were used by the devil to beguile Him, just as they are used by him to beguile us. The differences rather concern the will that is assailed than the attraction which assails it.

SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS

I cannot think with your friend that class-distinctions are wrong. They seem to me to spring from a truth, that, for good or bad, the children do inherit

from their parents not only money, but moral and intellectual qualities. One cannot truthfully refuse to see that the family A. has inherited refinement of manners, intellectual power, etc., while the family B. has inherited roughness, etc. Moreover, the aggregate of families like A. forms a social class which we may name X., and the aggregate of families like B. forms a different social class, Z. And if, by God's providence, one belongs to X. I do not think it is unchristian to enjoy participating in it. Of course a member of X. may degenerate and become coarse, and a member of Z. may become refined. Nor do I think that X. is necessarily more moral than Z. One of the best men I know is a builder; but, though I love and respect him sincerely, I don't enjoy talking with him as I do talking with a person whose social position is my own. And I think my builder friend would get rather bored if I were always visiting him; for much of his thought is necessarily about drain-pipes, and he would feel strained if I tried to talk about Plato.

Now I think it our duty (1) to recognise the real humanity of all men, and to despise none; (2) to recognise the bond which Christian faith establishes between all Christians whatever their social rank; (3) to repudiate equally the vices of a nobleman or of an artisan. But I don't think it my duty to treat the artisan as in every respect my equal, because I don't think it is true. Nor do I think it does good. The X.s used to make their servants dine at table with them, and found they could not get servants because they always shook hands with them.

The inheritance of social distinctions seems to me a surer thing than the inheritance of wealth. Money is apart from the man, and a man can claim and take a place in refined society with very small means. I

have a friend here who lives on a very small income earned by teaching. Yet she is accepted as an equal by persons of great wealth because she is in thought and temper and manner a perfect lady. Refinement is a personal acquirement, often no doubt helped by inheritance, but never merely inherited.

I don't in the least agree that, as things are, one cannot be a real friend to one's gardener, because I have many very real friends of that class; but they would be very uncomfortable if I asked them to dine with some equally real friends who are noblemen, because they have not the same manners or the same objects of interest. And this would be the case even if (which I should dispute) more gardeners are good men than lords.

Sometimes a singular degree of holiness gives such refinement to an uneducated man that no one thinks of his manners. I know one such man, with whom I have stayed at a peer's house, and neither he nor any of the guests felt the least incongruity. But such cases are exceptional, and one cannot expect every fisherman to be a St. Peter or a St. John. I suspect, too, that Christianity, which gives impetus to every truly national force, has so increased social evolution that the difference between the cultured and the uncultured classes is much greater than it was during our Lord's ministry.

I am late in speaking about a Lent rule. I should say that a very small self-denial regularly practised and offered to God is more mortifying to most of us than great austerities. It is easier to be extreme than to be wise. One must not risk one's health except for a grave reason; but one may risk one's bodily comfort, *e.g.* one may risk a headache by fasting Communion.

My kindest greetings to X. If she is expected

to "talk texts" to every patient, I should not advise her to take the post, nor should I take it. But if it means that she should look out for opportunities of spiritual help to others—reading a psalm, or saying a prayer or giving a word of exhortation—I think she would do well to avail herself of the chance of learning a difficult duty. We speak not from or of ourselves, but of the Lord, and such things as He sends us to speak.

COMMUNISM

I am sorry for X.'s communistic teaching. Do you remember the story about one of the Rothschilds? Two men came to his office saying, "All men ought to be equal; give us our share, or we will shoot you." He answered, "My estate is so many florins, and there are so many millions of people in Germany. That works out at six florins a head. Here are six for you, and six for you. Good morning." It was natural that the first generation of Christians should have been communists; but even then it was not compulsory, and in a short time it died out, and none of the Apostles seem to have blamed the cessation of it. Many virtues, such as foresight and industry and self-denial on behalf of children, have grown out of individualism, and I resent the assertion that it is not a lawful method for Christians. £4 a week would be starvation to those who need books for study, etc., while the certainty of it would encourage others to drink. It occurred to me to calculate how much I have earned as priest and as writer in the thirty-seven years since I was ordained, and it works out at about £3 10s. a week. I have a horror of

making things to be sins which are not really sins. It blinds our eyes to real sins.

REVIVALS

What you tell me about the Welsh Revival interests me much. I know nothing of the latter save from the papers. I should suppose there is a real outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which should be humbly accepted and welcomed; but the claim of Evan Roberts to special inspiration causes fear. It is an illustration of what St. Paul says about the two-fold foundation of the Church—upon Prophets, men with peculiar insight, who hear God's voice, and Apostles, who rule the Church according to established authority. Without Prophets the Church stagnates in routine; without Apostles inspiration wastes itself in vagaries. This is what I dread outside the Church, and wherever the Apostolic discipline is disregarded; yet it is difficult to see how God can teach in such places save by a Prophetic ministry; and we must be on our guard against supposing that because the movement has extravagances, it is not Divine. I think our duty is to welcome it, yet pray that it may be led in lines of safety and loyalty.

MENTAL HEALING AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

I have not the least sympathy with the impatience of sickness which is so prevalent, and which finds its most definite expression in "Christian science." No doubt, sickness is not part of the world as God made it. There would be no punishment in the plan of a school for perfect boys. But boys are not perfect,

nor are we. For us, such as we are, pain is often a very wholesome discipline. If it often fails to produce amendment, that is no more than we ought to expect, seeing that God, in saving a world which is so far a failure, is pleased to fail Himself. A victorious God would be out of sympathy with a failing world. He must fail, for the same reason that He must die. And I shudder to think what the world would be like if sickness were extirpated—how careless it would become of the real basal evil of selfishness—how content to bear sin if only it could get rid of suffering. The teaching of the Christian scientists is that sickness can be healed by a merely intellectual assertion that it does not and cannot exist, without any moral change of character. It seems to me to be Lutheranism run mad; for the essence of Lutheranism is, I suppose, that a mental act of faith supersedes moral effort, instead of being (as St. Paul's doctrine of Justification by faith asserts) the root out of which moral action proceeds.

One cannot be surprised, then, that our Lord's miracles of healing were limited in number. If even we cannot see sickness without wishing to relieve it, much less could He; yet it seems that He only used His power in a few cases; there is no suggestion that He healed wholesale, or that the misery in Israel was sensibly diminished. No doubt He knew that many people would be harmed rather than helped by being healed. I think it is true that miracles of healing are rather Jewish than Christian; but then there are people in every dispensation who are in the position of Jews. One may say that there are three possible positions in such a matter. Some are unbelievers, who do not believe in the power of our Lord to heal either inwardly or outwardly; some again are like

Jews, who look chiefly for outward blessings ; some again who accept the Gospel, care chiefly for inward healing. It is better to be a Jew than an unbeliever, and therefore we may expect Him to heal the bodies of some, to encourage them in a faith which is real if imperfect ; but we might also expect Him to abstain from healing some, that He may lead them on to a more Christian faith. If these thoughts are true, then some are unhealed because they have no faith at all ; and some because they have attained to a faith which can appreciate a better gift than bodily healing. Between them lies the class, great or small, who have a Jewish faith, to whom bodily healing would be suitable. I may be mistaken, but I am inclined to think that this last class is not large. It was the advantage of the Jews that they believed in God's sovereignty over the world, and did not doubt His right to give a law, or their own duty to obey it. This is just what those people in these days who do not live according to the Gospel, practically deny, for they assert their right to please themselves without regard to the law of God. In the early and the middle ages it was not so. I do not know whether men were better or worse, but they did not ignore God's law though they often disobeyed it. In those ages then there were many to whom the healing of disease was an appropriate sign which their faith could appreciate. I suppose it may be less appropriate now—too high for some, too low for others. It need not surprise us, then, if such works are now rare, nor do I see any reason why those who have learned the Fatherhood of God should desire them to be frequent. Not that I at all doubt their occurrence, or that they may be suitable in cases which may be numerically many, yet proportionally few.

The occurrence of healings by suggestion, which are common in connection with faith-healing and spiritism, seems to me not so much to touch the question whether miracles of healing are to be expected in the Christian religion at the present, as to show what may be the means by which some of our Lord's miracles of healing were wrought. It is likely enough that He healed the body by means of the mind; and we may have discovered His method, so that suggestion is entering into ordinary medicine without regard to religious faith. I fear that those who lay especial stress upon bodily healing are disposed to think less of the healing of sin.

To recur for a moment to the other question. Can we say that suggestion and faith are convertible terms? Faith seems to me, at least in the Christian sense, to bring us into relation to a Person; suggestion need not travel out of ourselves. Perhaps St. Paul was a healthy man; and a man of strong character does not often speak of his bodily infirmities. At all events Timothy had "oft infirmities;" and St. Paul does not reprove him for thus suffering, as if it showed a deficient trust in God, but he gives him dietetic directions. And if sickness is contrary to God's way of dealing with us, why not death? But all the saints have died. Moreover, many of the greatest saints have been sick, and have not thought their sickness other than a profitable discipline. Does Mrs. Eddy see God's mind better than they? And why should we make bodily sickness alone excluded from a world which is groaning and travailing? why should there be poverty and disappointment and perplexity?

SPIRITUAL HEALING

Our dear old dog we had to chloroform in the summer. We found him much aged when we returned, and it was kind to release him from decay. He had fourteen years or more of very happy life, and will take good messages of human kindness to other dogs wherever he is gone. If we are intended to be interpretations of God to the lower animals, it seems to me that their salvation must greatly depend upon our goodness. How can they learn to love God if we, who are as gods to them, make ourselves like devils?

That God does heal bodily disease by means of prayer and unction and laying on of hands I am quite sure, and have indeed had striking experience of it. But I cannot help fearing a tendency to make too much of bodily healing. I should rather say of sickness as St. Paul says of slavery, "use it rather." After all, the body has to die, else it would not share our Lord's path, and I feel that we may be giving too great importance to it if we seek special cures. I would rather leave it to the methods of medicine as a rule, that also being a divine ministry. Perhaps drugs are good enough for the purpose. But I don't mean to condemn those who practise gifts of healing. I should say that the reason why a second person is used is because God has made us in all things ministers one to another. He converts us by means of a preacher, and absolves us by means of a priest, and uses others to exhort and instruct us; and it does not seem to me strange that He heals us by the laying on of hands. How often we need to depend on others to save us from self-sufficiency!

SPIRITUALISM

As to Spiritualism: I believe that we are surrounded by a spiritual world, with which we have affinities, being ourselves spirits in the flesh. I think it consists of spirits both good and bad. And I do not think it is difficult to get access to this world. But there are two ways of doing so. The first is by Christian methods—by living a spiritual life, controlling the flesh, and cultivating the spirit. In this way saints have come into relation with holy spirits; sometimes by way of visory or auditory communications, and more frequently by way of influence of thought and feeling, which are far more valuable. And if sometimes such saints have come into communication with evil spirits, still they are guarded against their bad influence, and may perhaps help them. My dear old friend, Mr. Jukes, used to feel himself surrounded by miserable spirits, and not only prayed for them but used to preach to them.

The other way is by magic—*i.e.* not by seeking after a holy, spiritual life, but by using spells, moving tables, etc. The root of this practice is commonly unbelief—*i.e.* not being satisfied with a spiritual knowledge of the spiritual world, but desiring carnal evidence, such as audible voices or material figures. I see no reason to doubt that they often get what they seek, though, on the other hand, even spiritualists confess that the whole matter is honeycombed with fraud. But with what sort of spirits do they get intercourse? With spirits full of love and humility and purity, or with base spirits who long to get back to the house whence they have been cast forth, and are full of conceit and wrath and impurity? Usually,

I fear, the latter. It seems to be a law of the spirit-world that like is attracted to like ; and if I begin my search in an unchastened temper, the probability is that I shall meet spirits of like temper with my own. I do not deny that there is a chance that spirits of a nobler sort may now and then communicate by such means ; for certainly some unbelievers have found their way by spiritualism to the Christian faith ; but such cases are, I believe, rare exceptions, and we have no right to act on the chance of meeting them. Taking spiritualism as a whole, I find it closely associated with all sorts of heresy and vice. And I have found again and again that persons who have come to the faith through spiritualism have subsequently given up their magic, some of them because they have come to realise that they could not go on with it without endangering their new faith, and some because they find the teaching of the spirits so futile. It is no argument in favour of the character of these spirits that they sometimes give good advice, as an old friend of mine used to be reminded by what he believed to be his wife that next Sunday was his day for Communion. An evil spirit will have gained his point if he succeeds in making us do a right thing not because it is right but because he bids us do so. The spirit of divination at Philippi in Acts taught very true doctrine, yet St. Paul was grieved and cast him out. Nor, again, is there any reason to assume that the person who speaks to us is the person he claims to be ; for, according to the spiritualist theory, we are always surrounded with spirits, who are acquainted with the most secret of our acts, and may easily pass as other than they are.

So I think that magic is entirely wrong, as seeking to enter the spirit-world by unspiritual ways, and I

know that in countless cases it leads to all sorts of foulness. If we are trying to live under the influence of the Holy Spirit and in conformity to the saints, then no spiritual communications can be wrong; but I believe that to seek such communications by magical means is full of danger and entirely wrong. I know a little of the malice of such spirits, for I have suffered from it when I have been trying to deliver people from their influence. And there seems to me something horrible in trying to communicate with some departed saint by means of a medium who is often coarse and of questionable character, and whose profession is tainted with abundant fraud.

I do not know much of crystal-gazing. I suppose it is usually a way of allowing our sub-conscious mind to express itself; and in this way it brings up images of things which we have forgotten normally, and perhaps things of which we have no conscious knowledge. So far it corresponds to phenomena with which we are familiar—forgotten things rising unbidden into our consciousness, and even things which we cannot know through the senses, because they happen at a distance. So far I don't see anything wrong in it; though I doubt whether it is wise to stimulate a part of our minds which is naturally unconscious, and is not under the power of the intelligence and the will. I can conceive that it might lead to mental derangement. But I think there is evidence that sometimes the crystal represents things which are suggested by an intelligence outside our own, and in this case I believe the suggesting spirit (whether that of a dead man or of some other order) is mischievous. I have never, or only once, known a case in which a person who has given himself to spiritism has not been injured by it; and in many cases it leads to apostasy.

So I would have nothing to do with crystal-gazing, planchette, or the like; because at the best it seems to me to be tampering with the constitution of the mind, and at the worst it so opens the door to demonism. The danger of spiritism is that, as like spirit draws near to like, if we press rashly into the spirit-world, we come in contact with presumptuous and unholy spirits. It is different if, without seeking on our part, God permits spirits to communicate with us.

REINCARNATION

As to reincarnation, I have never read any argument in favour of it, except that a certain number of people say that they remember themselves as Helen of Troy or Julius Cæsar. They seldom remember themselves as the ordinary Balbus or other uninteresting persons. When (for instance) an Englishman remembers that he was once Tarquinius Superbus, and can give us real light on the Etruscan history, and interpret the Etruscan language, the key to which is lost, I shall be interested; or if Anne Boleyn gives us a reason for her execution which will fit in with the ascertained facts of history: but these persons have never come in my way. In each of them the theory seems to me mere assumption, and very improbable assumption. That our education continues after death, of course I believe; but it seems to me out of harmony with God's method of working to bring me back to the same school out of which I have passed. I expect Him to transfer me to another and a higher school. And considering how great a part memory plays in our moral education, I cannot think that if God brought me back to earth He would (in most cases) entirely

interrupt my memory. I look back upon my character thirty years ago, and see my faults, and learn to be penitent for them; but I cannot look back upon what I did when I was Nero, and repent of it.

If a person were constantly to urge you to sip arsenic or assafoetida you would answer that you dare not trifle with your health, which is a sacred trust. Might it not be the same with books which do not nourish, but rather agitate and injure?

THE SAME SUBJECT

I will answer your questions briefly, but there are two drawbacks to a brief treatment of such subjects. The one is that, in a short letter, one can only touch a few of the salient points, and this is a special misfortune in the case of Christian theology, the validity of which depends, not on few conclusive considerations, but on the convergence, and the patient harmonising, of many considerations, some of which seem at first sight almost contradictory. The second drawback is that the writer of a short letter is almost bound to write peremptorily and without the courtesy which, I hope, I feel towards all diligent and patient seekers after truth, even when I think they go astray.

With these preliminary remarks I will go on to say what I think of the doctrine of Reincarnation.

In the first place, I think it is almost wholly without evidence. There are a number of historical problems which could be set at rest at once by the testimony of a person who was concerned in them. I will instance two of these—the interpretation of the Etruscan language, and the genuineness of the Casket Letters. No ancient Etruscan has appeared to give

the clue to that language which philologists long to discover ; and although (if I am not mistaken) X. and some others have claimed to be Reincarnations of Mary Queen of Scots, I do not know that any of them have thrown light upon the Letters.

But if direct evidence of this sort is not forthcoming, it may yet be argued that Reincarnation is revealed. By whom ? and where ? There is one passage in the New Testament which may indicate (what we know from other sources) that some Jews believed in it ; but I am bold to say that not a single word of our Lord or His apostles refers to this doctrine or asserts it, though its modern upholders make much of it as a fundamental doctrine of religion. As Christians I think we cannot but view this silence as an argument against the doctrine.

But there is a positive argument against it which seems to me much more weighty. It dissociates moral discipline from memory. So far as our experience goes, in matters of all sorts, memory is the chief motive to amendment. Because I remember that I burnt my finger I avoid the fire. Had the burn occurred when I was unconscious, so that I had no memory of it, it would not have had this salutary effect. So in moral matters. The memory that I stole (say) twenty years ago makes me to-day more patient under suspicion or punishment, more humble because the memory makes me ashamed, more watchful, for if I stole once I may do so again, more tender with thieves because I remember that I was once one of them. Experience is full of persons who are moved by the memory of past sin to practise the contrary virtue. But if Reincarnation is true, it dissociates memory and discipline. William is poor, despised, afflicted. The Reincarnationist will say it is because ages ago he was

a villain—say Nero. But he remembers nothing, or next to nothing, of his Neronian days: he has no ground for saying, “I’m poor now, because in the year 70 I lived in shameful luxury; I am despised now, because then I drank in flattery; I am afflicted now, because then I was selfishly at ease.” He remembers nothing of his life then; knows nothing of it save as it is recorded in Suetonius; can never be penitent for what he is supposed to have done then, as he may be for what he remembers that he did twenty years ago. Suppose that twenty years ago he robbed a kind father, he will remember the details with shame, and try to make amends, if not to his father, then to his brothers whom he defrauded. The clear and detailed memory of his sin will make him humble and patient under his suffering to-day. Every person who has had to train souls knows how essential self-examination—the detailed memory of past sins—is to amendment. But according to the new teaching this detailed memory is usually impossible. William cannot remember how, as Nero, he robbed Caius. He cannot repent of so remote and shadowy a sin.

I have not time now to touch upon the question of matter and spirit, save only to say that it seems to me dualistic, and therefore unphilosophical, to regard matter and spirit as antithetical. To me, matter is the expression of spirit, and spirit is the reality of matter. I do not think anything is gained for spirit by the exclusion of matter. Rather, what I look for is the subjugation of matter by spirit. Whatever may be the difficulty of the case, eating on the part of the risen Christ is asserted by St. Luke xxiv. 43.

DEMONIACAL POSSESSION

It seems to me that belief in demoniacal possession becomes more and more credible. At one time, when the view of personality as merely limitation—so that *I* am not *he*—prevailed, it was difficult to see how one personality could enter into another and take possession of it. I do not indeed think this view of personality is false; for there is something (call it what you will) which distinguishes *me* from *him*; and I do not see why we should discard the old term *person*, though it is perhaps etymologically unsatisfactory, because it seems to refer not so much to the unit of identity as to the form (mask) under which that unity discloses itself. But until some other and better term is introduced for that unit, I prefer (for the sake of avoiding confusion) not to use such terms as “multiplex personality” which people of F. Myers’ school propose.

But it is increasingly clear that no person lives as an isolated unit. He lives in others, and others in him. We cannot cut him off in thought from his parents, his nation, his other environments. We cannot say, “This is my thought,” in the sense that it is not the thought of my time, my race, etc. To use figures, we cannot think of a man as one in a heap of pebbles, each of which is round, limited, independent of others; but must rather think of him as a living member of a body, which (though it has its own proper function) shares the life of the whole, is enriched by the corporate wealth, and impoverished by corporate disease.

So we are more able than perhaps other ages were to do justice to the influence of others upon ourselves.

We realise that we do not obscure our own personality by admitting the penetrating power of environment.

Restricting ourselves at present to the case of evil environment, we recognise that the criminal is, at least in a measure, the embodiment of evil elements in society. Without denying his power of self-determination—to do this would be to deny morality, for if a man is no more than the result of social or physical forces it is unjust to blame him for being bad or to praise him for being good—yet we acknowledge that self-determination is so far restricted that a man is biased by the entry into him of forces, good and bad, which affect his character.

I should be very different from what I am if the good influence of A. or the bad influence of B. had not entered into the sphere of my personality. When I am good, I show not only my own goodness but that of A.; when I am bad, I show the badness of B.

This is the case in our ordinary life. The now undoubted facts of hypnotism show the case still more strongly. When a hypnotist makes me behave like a drunkard after a glass of water, or try to light my pipe with an icicle, he has really taken possession of my intelligence. It is not I, a fairly sensible person, who play these pranks, but he, who has gained an influence over me.

Yet you would rightly blame me for letting him gain this influence. I have no right to put myself thus in subjection to him. Still less if I know from the beginning that he is a bad man, and will influence me for evil. It is probable indeed that the extent of his influence depends more or less upon my moral habit—that he might, for instance, induce me to light my pipe with an icicle, but that he could not make

me drunk with water, if my habit of mind is fixedly against getting drunk at all.

We have, then, in our earthly experience, something which comes very near possession. If there is a spirit-world at all, should we expect this phenomenon to be more or less marked?

I should suppose, *more*: partly because we may have to deal with beings more potent than men in the flesh, partly because their occupations, etc., may erect a barrier which does not exist in the case of spirits. However this may be, I think we are justified in saying that our ordinary life provides us with examples of what is more completely found in the spirit-world in the opposite forms of Grace and Possession.

When St. Paul says, "I, yet not I, but Christ Who dwelleth in me," I think he is speaking of an experience for good which belongs to this class. It is not only that the recorded example of Christ stimulates him, but that he is conscious of Christ really dwelling in him, possessing him, enabling him to do what by himself he could not do.

813 Now, if there be evil spirits (and if there are evil spirits in the flesh, it is arbitrary to assume that there are none out of the flesh), why should not they have the power of attaining such influence as is ascribed to Possession? I think the old gradation is probable: first, temptation, to which we are all exposed; then obsession, that is to say, such close and constant temptation as may be compared to a siege; then, when we have yielded to the lower forms of attack, Possession, in which we are no longer our own, but speak, act, think at the bidding of the malicious beings whom we have allowed to take possession of us. I am tempted to desire harm to my enemy: I may resist by

prayer, or I may give way until the desire for vengeance becomes habitual. I may still pray and resist; but if I give way, why should not the demon who tempts get such a hold over me that I have no will apart from his, can struggle no longer, and (unless help comes from without) become hopelessly his slave?

Here, I think, we gain some light from the phenomena of spiritism. I go to a séance, am interested in it—this is like Temptation. After a time I get wrapped up in it, resort to it constantly, judge my daily life by the standard of it—this is like Obsession. In time perhaps I become a medium, *i.e.* I lose, at least at times, my own individuality, think the thoughts of some spirit who enters into me, speak his words, do his acts. This is, I think, Possession; and, whether it actually happens or not, it claims to be what the Bible calls Possession.]

The only difficulty that occurs to me is that the Bible speaks of young people as being possessed. Can we think that at their time of life they can have passed through temptation and obsession to this more awful state? We must remember the intense malignant wickedness which we find sometimes in children; and if we are obliged to admit this, we can hardly be surprised if it is possible for them so to open their personality to a demon as to allow him to enter in and dwell there.

I think, then, that our Lord did really expel demons who had taken up their abode in certain men. I do not think it would be worthy of His truthfulness to address demons when the mischief was really no more than the sufferer's opinion that there were demons possessing him. But I think that the cure was very likely operated by His presence appealing to that

relic of true humanity which remains over in the worst, and which by accepting the Saviour's help could arise and expel the tyrant.

I could tell you of several cases in which priests whom I know have quieted furious persons by bidding the demon leave them. (Of course it would be wrong to assume that all madness is possession; often it is dreadful bodily malady, and comes to the holiest of men.) And if I had time I would tell you my own experience of a haunted room, where the horrible noises ceased when I bade the demons, if they were there, cease to molest God's servants: though this is, of course, not a case of possession. I think the best book on the subject is Delitzsch, *Biblical Psychology* (Eng. tr. published by Clark, Edinburgh).

No doubt Schofield is right in speaking of the controlling power in nervous disease of the Christian temper. I do not think a person who strives to serve God need fear possession; though I have more than once had an impression that after trying to help such persons, I have been exposed to special malice from evil spirits.

I think those who awoke our Lord showed some faith, in that they turned to Him; but the faith was so feeble, in that they had no trust in the Father's care Whom He came to reveal, that He treats it as almost none. They were like those who, while they call to Him as the Saviour, allow themselves to retain a distrust of the Father as if He meant them ill. I believe it was a real calming of the sea. If our wills, working by the use of oil, can calm waves, it seems reasonable that He should do so without oil. The real difficulty is the nexus between the will and the material, whether oil or waves. How can my will move the oil-jar? I do not know that this can be

explained, but it is so familiar that we hardly notice it.

“THE BIBLE ONLY”

I am not at all in love with the vagueness which thinks the “Bible is broad enough” for every sort of opinion. It means really nothing else than that the Bible has no particular meaning, and each sect has the right of making for itself a mixture which it will label “Christian religion.” This is a curious turn for those to make, who begin with saying their religion is the “Bible only,” and the Church has no authority in matters of faith; for they really teach that the only authority in religion is the sect (which ultimately means the individual), using as much of the Bible as it or he pleases. I am sure you could not conscientiously teach on such a basis.

THE CHURCH'S PROPER WORK

As to what you say about the Church theatre I quite agree with you. I have no objection to a religious play in a religious spirit, though I have seen none but Parsifal. But I am sure the immediate work of the Church is to preach the Gospel to sinners; and if she inspires art and science, it must be as secondary work, and rather carried on by persons whom she has trained to be Christians than by herself as a social body. I think the same of alms: that the Church should teach men to be liberal, but that the distribution of their alms should not be the work of the Church but of civil society which she has trained to charity. We see the result of neglecting this distinction in the prevalent view that the Church is rather

the almoner than the giver of grace. I have often thought that the one way of evangelising such a place as South London is by a community of men absolutely poor themselves and quite unable to give alms. But this may be a counsel of perfection; and I would not discourage any attempt to do what can be done by less suitable means. But for myself, I have always felt it an insuperable hindrance to taking a parish, that I could not conscientiously work it in the ordinary way with clubs and tea-parties, yet did not feel sure enough of myself to carry out a different principle. I think there is a necessary distinction between those who see principles and those who do the work; and I am quite content to be among the former, and very thankful that circumstances enable me to take my place.

MONTE CARLO

I should not myself feel it right to go to a concert at a gambling casino. At Monte Carlo they find it pays them to give music free or below its cost in order to attract decent people there, because out of those who go there for innocent pleasure some are enticed to play. If there were nothing there but gambling, they would have no chance of entrapping innocent people. I think there is something to be said in favour of the State licensing gambling houses, because it cannot stop the vice, and it may be better to regulate it. But I think Christian people ought to avoid such a place, and not give it a spurious look of decency.

And then I should not myself think I was acting honourably if I were to speak and act against a gaming-place and yet receive favours from it; any more than if I were to speak against a man and yet dine at his table.

As to the other question, I should certainly practise the organ at that church, and attend it when convenient, and subscribe to its funds, unless these were for a purpose with which one could not sympathise, such as the Church Association. It is, after all, a church, even though the chaplain may not realise or act up to the teaching of the Church, and one ought to show sympathy. I am always glad of opportunities of subscribing to the Church Missionary Society, though I don't like all its ways.

MISCELLANEOUS

BLAKE

IN the quality of poet, Blake has for me a charm which is his alone. There is a simple directness of vision which is unequalled save in some of the psalms; and if there are defects in workmanship, such as faulty rhymes, these defects impress me rather as the defects of his drawing impress you—as having a soul of beauty which gives a charm which is often lacking in the more precise work of others. His false grammar does not irritate me as does that of Byron.

Further, I am disposed to believe that his visions are real. When an honest man assures me that he sees what I cannot see—and Blake was eminently honest—I feel bound to accept his assertion. It does not follow that his interpretation of his visions is correct.

I love Blake, then; yet I am compelled to see in him something which deprives him of supreme excellence. What is it? I think it a lack of self-criticism. He is not wanting in the power of criticism, for his judgment of others is often keen and wise. But I doubt whether he had the habit of saying to himself, Am I sure that I am right? When a notion caught him it took possession of him. Probably the root of this was his conviction that he was inspired. I think he was inspired, but that inspiration calls for

criticism and does not over-ride it. Perhaps he would have done better work if he had put aside a poem until he could come to it as a stranger and judged and improved it. The childlike bloom of his poems might have suffered, but the general result would have been improved. I think I see the same defect in his ethics. He was a really religious man, and his character was good; yet he clung to his idea that all prohibition is evil, so that the indulgence of passion is right and divine.

In this respect I think he was insane. I use that word, because the word "insane" has come to mean something more definite. I do not think he was insane in the sense that his visions were illusions, but I think he lacked the sanity which comes of self-questioning and self-distrust. One sees the same defect in his unreasonable jealousy and suspicion, and in his unworthy behaviour to his generous friend Hayley and others. When a suspicion caught hold of him he treated it as infallible.

Yet with all his defects he was a wonderful man, the more wonderful because he arose in the most prosaic age. He was as much a man not of his age as Law was in respect of religion. But Law had behind his unusual experiences a background of firm catholic faith; and this Blake never had. I am very glad you have drawn attention to a man who stands quite alone, at least in poetry.

THE SAME SUBJECT

THE ETHICS OF REVIEWING

You speak about Blake. Like you, I can make very little of his longer poems, but the shorter ones

seem to me quite unique in charm. I think an edition with notes by a really sympathetic editor is much to be desired. Swinburne is discerning as a poet, but lacks sympathy in religion; and William Rossetti cannot understand either aspect of him. Whatever the peculiarities of Blake's theology (and that, like his morals, was extremely strange), it is evident that religion was the atmosphere of his thought. D. G. Rossetti was the man who could have interpreted him; and next to him I think Frederick Shields is the man who understands him best. When Shields was a young man, a friend lent him two books to read in illness; the one I forget, the other was Blake. He began with the other book, and threw it away in disgust; then he took up Blake, and found in him the prophet whom he had been longing for. But I have never succeeded in getting him to give a general criticism of him. By the way, do you know Shields' great work in the chapel of the Ascension, near the Marble Arch? When finished it will consist of some 130 large pictures besides a number of smaller ones. The chapel is at present only open in the afternoons about four. I know no modern pictures so full of interest. They are well worth a pilgrimage.

It is a somewhat intricate question of morals, how far one is bound to point out the elements in which a writer seems defective. I would not review a book which I thought seriously injurious to faith or morals, however clever it might be. It would not seem to me right to do anything which would increase the popularity of such a book; and, on the other hand, I should fear to be too unsympathetic to discover the real excellence of such a work. If I were writing a short account of a book, I should be satisfied to point out the chief aspects of it without much remark. But

if I were writing a real and detailed criticism, I should not think I was doing my duty to myself or my readers if I did not point out what seem to me the weak points in the theory of life which the book implies. If, for instance, my author's pessimism sprang from a denial of God's providence, or if his optimism sprang from a cowardly refusal to see the actual facts of man's wickedness, I should feel bound to say so. The only thing really worth writing about is the criticism of life; and it would seem to me dishonest to suppress what I thought an essential point in the writer's ethical position.

Have you read the letters of Mr. and Mrs. Browning? What I have read of them is delightful, well worthy of two persons who were good as well as great. I have also been much interested in the poems of Phillips, though "Paolo and Francesca" seems to me wanting in recognition of the sovereign office of will in the forming of character. A great deal too much seems to be given to circumstance, with the moral result that a sin seems inevitable, and the artistic result that one feels towards the characters as puppets rather than persons. I suppose he is a young man, and hope he will do better work. Here one sees little of new books, but I owe to the kindness of a friend, Caird's "Fundamental Ideas of Christianity," which seems admirable, though not beyond criticism. I have also Ward's "Naturalism and Agnosticism," which promises to be very interesting.

WAGNER

I wonder whether you have heard any Wagner plays? The whole theory of the Nibelungen Ring is the "corruption which is in the world through lust"—

the lust of gold first, and then every other self-seeking passion ; which bears along even the noblest of men, and even the gods of heathendom, to the Götterdämmerung—the Twilight of the gods, in which they pass away. Then, just at the end, there is a brief scenic and musical prophecy of the coming in of a New Law of redemption.

It would be untrue not to represent Siegmund and Sieglinde as victims of passion: none without redemption can resist it. “Tristan and Isolde” is more open to censure ; but there again the lesson is of Magic—*i.e.* the delusion of the world of sense, under the compulsion of which they sin. There is less of redemption here, I think, because Wagner had learned the lesson of pessimism but had not found the way out of it.

I used often to wish to give a few lectures at Kilburn on Wagner’s philosophy of religion, but I never found time. I do not know whether there will be any reason for lectures of this sort in Florence, but I hope there may be. I believe a great deal of good may be done by speaking of art and literature from a Christian point of view.

NEWMAN

What a star has passed out of view in Newman ! His sermons never impressed me as much as they do most people ; but the *Apologia* and *Gerontius* are works of the most splendid genius. I think the newspaper writers, though fair and admiring, are (as usual) wrong because they write before they think. None, so far as I have read, perceive that Newman was not a great theologian, but a great poet, whose imagination seized a truth (or what seemed a truth), and then the

logical faculty followed and made an admirable defence of it. In some essentials his mind was like Browning's, only that he was not dramatic. If we could imagine Browning not throwing himself dramatically into every speaker in the "Ring and the Book," but become intensely possessed with the views of Guido, Pompilia, and the rest, and speaking each speech not dramatically, but from firm conviction, one would have a close parallel to Newman. Do you not think so?

People used to say that Newman's logical mind took a step which Pusey and others ought to have taken, had they been more logical. To my mind, the impulse which led Newman to Rome was distinctly not that of logic, but that of imagination. The sad blemishes of the English Church, the many splendid nobilities of Rome, seized his imagination and he went. And what a strange dispensation of mercy it was to the English Church that Newman, the genius, was taken from her, and that she was left to the more sober and prosaic guidance of Pusey—learned, holy, but not a poet!

MISS YONGE'S NOVELS

I agree with X. in thinking very few novels equal to Miss Yonge's. Some others may be cleverer; but here you are introduced to a number of people who are really high-principled and worth coming to know well, and the writer just gives you enough introduction to enable you to know them; then the rest comes with familiarity. Consequently I hardly know any novels—hardly even G. Eliot's—which so well repay frequent reading, so I am looking forward to a tenth reading of the "Daisy Chain" with much pleasure. Only you

forgot to write my name in it. This fault you might rectify when you come.

Many thanks also for your letter. No, I like the "Huguenots." Here and there I think Meyerbeer gave way to the sham passion of the French Romantics, but I always look at that opera with Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* as really great works of art in spite of some affectation. Curiously I have never heard any other opera of Meyerbeer.

Balfour's book struck me just in the same way. It is very clever negatively, but with little positive suggestion. In my article in *Fraser* I have tried (to the best of my power) to supply his defect. I have distinguished two classes of faculties by which the reason acts : (i) perceptive, (ii) logical. The percepts are to be credited hypothetically, though they need to be analysed and criticised by the logical faculty, *i.e.* if a man says, "I see this," he is to be believed until criticism pulls to pieces what he says he sees. Faith belongs to the perceptive class : by it, or by some very similar faculty, we believe what we could not have proved by logic : *e.g.* the existence of the world, causation, time, space, God. The human race as a whole bears witness (often unconsciously, and therefore more convincingly) to its perception of these things. If logic can prove that the world, etc., or God is impossible, the belief must go. But it does not. All it says is, "You cannot prove these things ;" but we have never, if wise, said we could.

MISS OCTAVIA HILL'S WORK

I do not think I have ever answered your welcome letter of December 3, in which you tell me of your work

under Miss Octavia Hill. She is a person for whom I have the greatest reverence, though I have only had the advantage of meeting her once, many years ago. Her principles seem to me the only sound ones, combining kindness and sympathy with discipline. I dare say things are very different now from what they were twenty years ago; but then I was forced to admit that most of the benevolent works did more harm than good to the class which it was purposed to help, though I could see how much good they did in training the workers to make benevolence not capricious and emotional but systematic. Perhaps this sort of beginning was necessary, much as the East India Company was necessary to prepare the way for the Indian Empire. And through all this time of experiments Miss Hill has been perceiving and following the right way and training others to do so. It is really one of the things of which England may be proud. In this country the recent disaster at Messina has taught the need of such training. There has been a good deal of sympathy and generosity, but an entire lack of methods and prudence; the old idea of giving a half-penny to everybody who asks for it still prevails, and little real impression has been made upon the solid mass of destitution.

I must tell you a story which has just reached me. Some children were being taught to say as their grace, "The eyes of all," etc., and one child responded, "Thou givest them their meat from New Zealand."

THE TOWNS OF NORTH ITALY

I am so glad you enjoyed Venice and the rest of your tour, and that you found my hints useful. I think you will find that even a short visit to the

Venetian and Lombard towns leaves a vivid impression. There is so much individuality in them; indeed, whatever Americans and admirers of Emerson may say, I believe the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to which these cities owe their glory, formed the most individualistic age after the age of the Persian wars and the Athenian supremacy. Men worked out their individual character for good or bad; often for the latter. Yet the individual development was not checked but modified in Venice by love of the city, in Florence by love of party, and in many persons in all states by unquestioning belief in the Church. None of these forces flattened character: they provided it with wide and varied fields of development. Symonds deals well with this in his history of the Renaissance, but he would have done better if he had had more sympathy with the mystical element in Italian life, as we find it, for instance, combined with dry science in St. Thomas, or with politics in Savonarola.

ART AND MORALITY

About the relation between painting and higher things I am much more uncertain than I was a few years ago. It seems to me certain that a man cannot paint a great picture without having a gift of seeing beneath the surface of things. No amount of dexterity can take the place of insight. Nor, again, can I think that insight can be very deep unless a man sees that nature is a witness to a Power which creates beauty because its ultimate concern is goodness; though of course the precise content of goodness remains to be estimated by other criteria than those of art, and is differently estimated under different circumstances.

But difficulty arises when we admit that great artists have often been men of low moral attitude. Would Turner have been a greater painter if he had been prayerful and pure, I cannot say. The evidence seems to me hardly to go further than that the province of art is very limited, and has little direct relation to nobler matters. Some modern critics seem to say that, because art has little direct relation to morality, therefore morality is a matter of less importance. Assuming the facts to be real, I should rather draw the opposite conclusion, and say that what has little direct relation to conduct is after all not one of the main concerns of man. But, as I said before, I am conscious of increasing ignorance on the matter.

SIENESE ART

I am very glad you enjoyed your little trip to Siena. I do not know whether it is fanciful to see in the art of the Ghibelline towns, such as Siena and Arezzo, a strain of Germanism, which may suggest one of the reasons why those towns failed to influence the great stream of Italian developments. At the same time it fertilised the soil, and so long as it progressed, Sienese painting and Sienese architecture were on the whole finer than anything Florentine. Villari has something to say about this in his book on early Florentine history; but there is much that he has not said.

VENETIAN ART

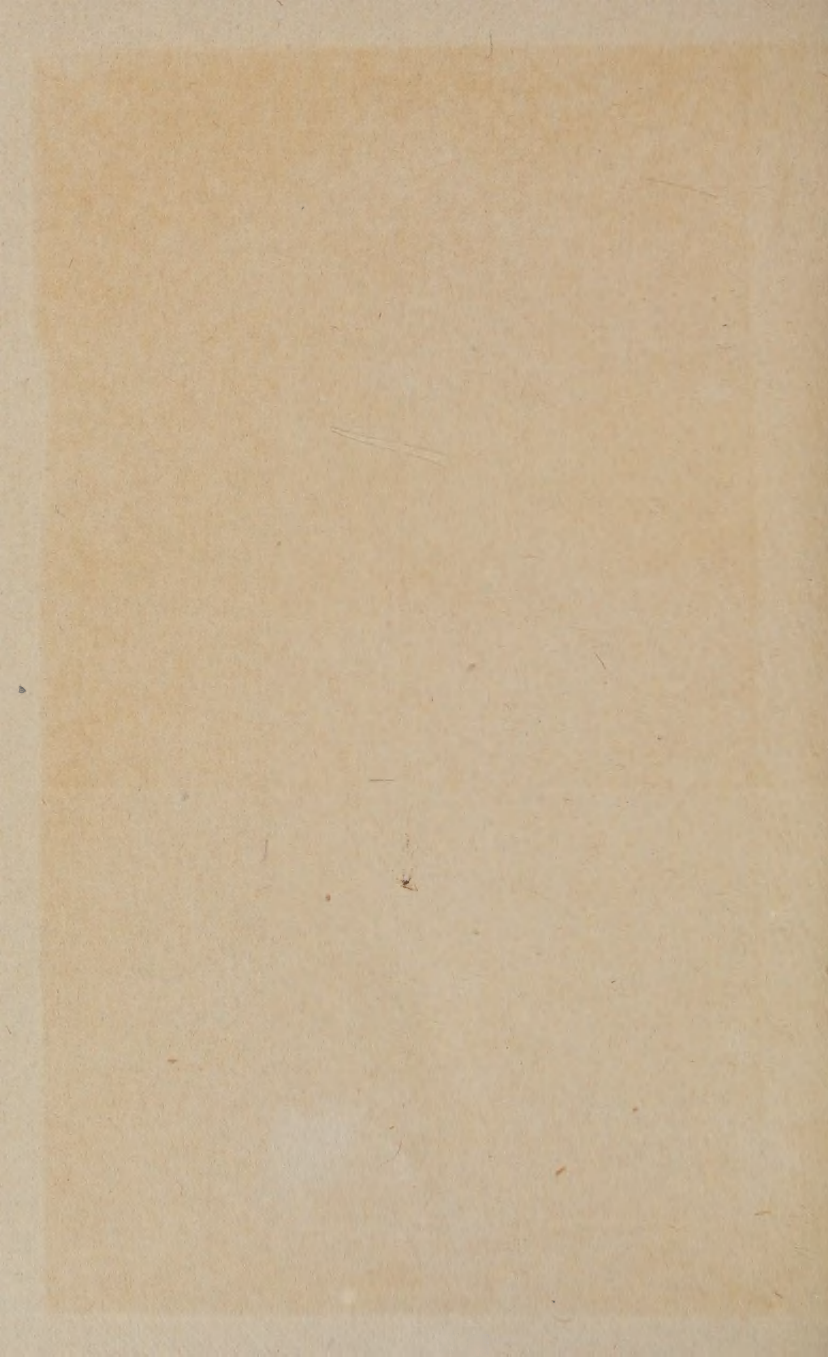
Your estimate of the pictures (at Venice) agrees with that of a party from Toynbee Hall, who greatly preferred Florentine art. There may have been truth in the suggestion which J. A. Symonds made to me,

that they were men of grit, who had used great frugality to get the holiday, and they found more that was congenial in Tuscan austerity than in Venetian lusciousness. But I love the older Venetians, and I love also Carpaccio with his modern power of telling a tale; but I do not care for Titian. Tintoret I begin to appreciate after a long effort to follow Ruskin. Once we determined to go to S. Rocco without Ruskin, and judge for ourselves, and we came to the conclusion that two of the pictures were really fine. Turning to Ruskin's list, we found that one of them he omitted, and of the other noted, "In this picture T. is beneath contempt." Yet I cling to my opinion. When Shields was a young man he painted under Ruskin's guidance and thought him infallible until for the first time he came to Florence. Then he found that Ruskin was not perfect, and on his return to England began to work independently.

WATTS' "HOPE"

About Watts' "Hope": I think he wishes to show Hope in fortitude: the harp-strings broken, the eyes bandaged, the feet bleeding, but one star of promise above, and the frail figure suffering but not daunted. It is easy enough to hope when all things go smoothly; but when all things are contrary, and still we cling to perseverance, then Hope is seen in her true nobility. I think Watts must have got the notion from Botticelli's Fortitude—weary, sad, but unflinching. You will see this picture when you are with us. A virtue is often best seen when it is tried to the uttermost. It is not our easy successes which glorify us, but our perseverance against almost overwhelming difficulties.

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